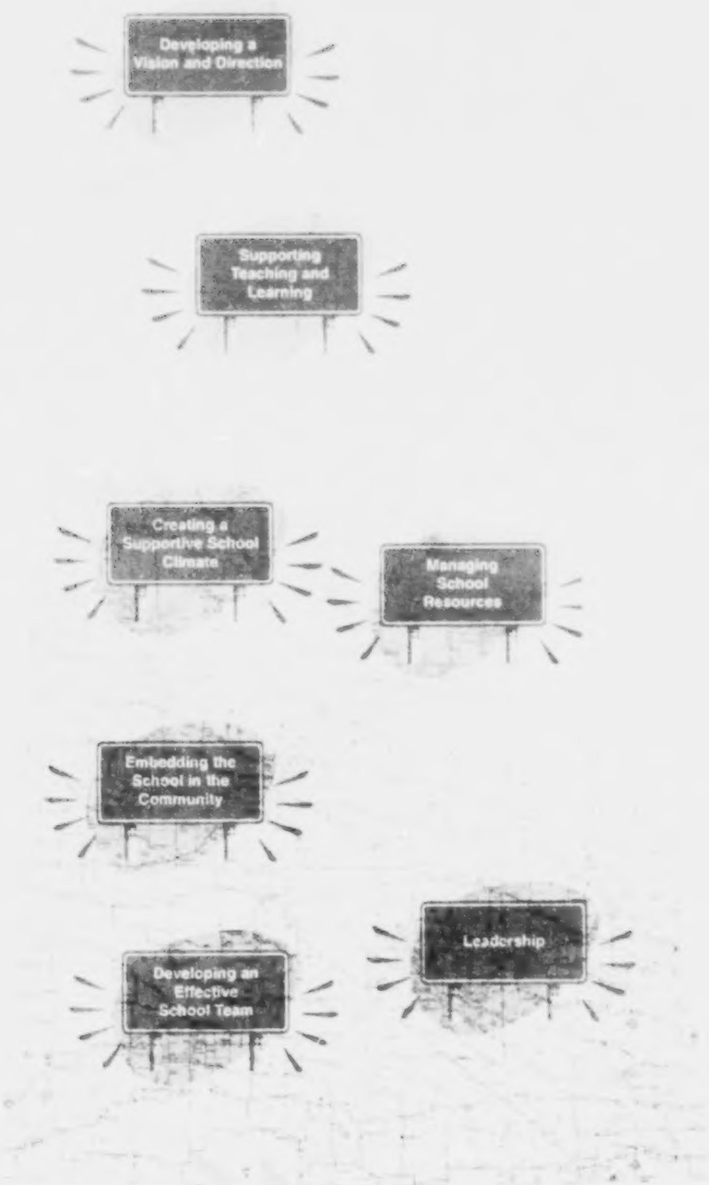
A Significant Journey


Developing a Vision and Direction
Supporting Teaching and Learning
Creating a Supportive School Climate
Managing School Resources
Embedding the School in the Community
Leadership
Developing an Effective School Team

A Saskatchewan Resource for the Principalship

A Significant Journey: A Saskatchewan Resource for the Principalship

Written for the Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit
By Sue Brooks and Laurel Irving Piot

Advisory Committee

Rene Archambault, Official Minority Language Office
Barry Bashutski, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
Al Boutin, St. Paul's RCSSD, LEADS
Sue Brooks, EclecThink International
Michael Collins, Saskatchewan Valley School Division, STF
Sara Comerford, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
Gwen Dueck, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation
William Duffee, Ile a la Crosse School Division
Laurel Irving Piot, Wadena School Division, STF
Maureen Johns Simpson, Regina School Division
Tony Linner, Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation
Ken Loehndorf, North West RCSSD, LEADS
Gary Luke, Saskatchewan Learning
Jane Macleod, Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit
Dawna Olson, Northern Lights School Division, STF
Daryl Pearson, Meadow Lake School Division, STF
Sharon Yuzdepski, Saskatchewan Learning

Saskatchewan
Learning

Copyright 2003 Saskatchewan Learning

ISBN 1-894743-57-1

104-03342/

Travel Guide

Role of the Principal 4

Planning for Leadership 15

Developing Vision and Direction 33

Creating A Supportive School Climate 73

Supporting Teaching and Learning 109

Embedding the School in the Community 151

Developing an Effective School Team 185

Managing School Resources 217

Staying on Track: Legal Issues for School-Based Administrators 239

Foreword

The intent of this Saskatchewan resource is to support the work of principals in Saskatchewan. Although this document focuses strictly on the role of the principal, it is recognized that other members of the school staff are frequently involved in school-based administration. This resource will also apply to vice principals, assistant principals, and others who carry out important responsibilities for administration in Saskatchewan schools. Over the past decade the complex role of the principal has been the subject of discussions and the focus of ad hoc committees. Reasons for this attention include the increasingly complex nature of education and educational leadership in the province. Increasing expectations of society, and increasing needs of children and families have resulted in the changing role of the principal. Supports and structures that surround principals have been unable to keep pace with the rate of change in the day-to-day life of in-school administrators.

One initiative emerging from discussions surrounding the recruitment and retention of principals is the document *The Role of the Principal* which identifies six key dimensions of the work of the school-based principal. The partners in the development of *The Role of the Principal* are Saskatchewan Learning, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association (SSTA), League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents of Saskatchewan (LEADS), and the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF). The key dimensions are:

- Developing Vision and Direction
- Creating a Supportive School Climate
- Supporting Teaching and Learning
- Embedding the School in Community
- Developing an Effective School Team
- Managing School Resources

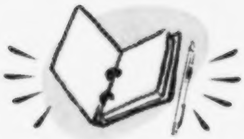
The Saskatchewan Resource supports *The Role of the Principal* by expanding upon these six leadership dimensions. Each section is organized into three parts: background information, school year-based practices and procedures, and a travel kit of sample ideas and resources. The sections and pages do not need to be used in a sequential manner; rather, administrators are invited to make reference to and utilize any sections that appear to be timely.

This resource represents the collective insights and expertise of Saskatchewan school-based leaders. Principals, aspiring in-school administrators, directors, and school board members have contributed to the document and provided insight as to how best to support principals in their work.

The primary audience for this document is the in-school administrator. However, the document recognizes that the in-school administrator interfaces with a variety of other partners. When the term "educational partners" is used in this document, it may include, but not be exclusive to:

- Division and school employees
- Board Members
- Parents
- Aboriginal Partners
- School$^{\text{PLUS}}$ partners
- Community Members

Principals are invited to make the document reflect their own philosophy and practice by adding to the document, highlighting sections that are meaningful or important, and incorporating materials relevant to one's school and school division. The intent of the document is that it be practical, useful, and purposeful in the work of school-based administrators.



A ***Note to Principals:*** *Consider this document a leadership portfolio. It is yours to keep and use as you travel throughout your career. It can follow you to each school in which you serve. Each dimension of the principalship contains a travel kit of helpful resources that you can refer to, add to, remove for use, etc. This travel kit is an opportunity to create a resource which is unique to you and your setting.*

You will find many stories in this document. Through the stories we honour the complexity of the principal's role. Your "to do" lists may be long and multifaceted, but the stories show that the life of the principal is not only one of checklists, but also of complex relationships, roles, and duties.

Take time to become the best principal you can be. Like most things in life it is a journey, not a destination. Enjoy the trip. Take time to stop and smile at the beautiful children along the way and don't forget to eat your lunch and go to the bathroom!

Legend:

The light illuminates a "best practice" story as told by principals in the field.

The Travel Kit points to a practical strategy, resource, or idea found in the Travel Kit section located behind each dimension.

Principals are good storytellers. Often these stories can be told around the staff room coffee table, or while principals are on the move. When you see the travel mug, it indicates a story told in the principal's own words. Let us learn from each other's stories.

The question mark indicates questions frequently asked by principals and those considering embarking on in-school administration.

?
Information
Here

The Travel Journal symbolizes a reflective opportunity.

The Role of the Principal

The principalship is the basic unit of school administration in Saskatchewan.[1] It is a vital element in the effective functioning of our education system, and consequently, it is important that the role of the principal be consistent, transparent, well understood, and well supported across the province. Overriding all other aspects of this key role is the service that principals provide to support learning and the fullest educational development for all students.

The goal of this document is to promote greater clarity about the role of the principal among educators and the general public. For the first time, the major organizational partners in education have worked jointly to produce a descriptive statement of the role of the principal for formal approval by Saskatchewan Learning, the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and the League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents.

The partners realize that to some extent, it is misleading to refer to "the role of the principal" as if a single purpose and a resulting set of responsibilities have been assigned to this position within the school. In reality, principalships are flexible and responsive to variations in context, and there are marked differences in the specific functions, obligations and duties that Saskatchewan principals undertake to serve students and support others within the education system. Moreover, as schools evolve, it is possible that "the role" will also change as principals adapt their work to new school purposes and priorities. In speaking of "the role of the principal", therefore, the following statement focuses on broad, reasonably stable dimensions that characterize all principalships at this time.

It is hoped that this statement will assist principals, boards of education and others within the community formed around each school in defining the particulars of each principal's role in a way that is appropriate to the context and consistent with the common understanding of the principalship in our province.

---

[1] Although this document focuses strictly on the role of the principal, it is recognized that other members of the school staff are frequently involved in school-based administration. This focus was chosen to recognize the unique legislated responsibilities of principals and to simplify the discussion of the dimensions of the administrative role. Aspects of the discussion will also apply, however, to vice-principals, assistant principals, and others who carry out important responsibilities for administration in some schools.

Factors in Defining the Principal's Role

The role of the principal has acquired numerous layers of definition through legislation, policy, education, research, and practice.

- Under *The Education Act, 1995*, each school must have a principal who carries out the broad range of duties outlined in general terms in Section 175 of the Act.

- Provincial legislation authorizes boards of education to put in place policies and procedures that provide further direction to principals with respect to their role. These policies and procedures represent a local vision of schools and school administration. They also express the expectations of the community served by the school division and the requirements of the board as the employer of principals, teachers, and other school personnel. Boards of education employ principals to administer schools, and each principal is accountable for the operation of the school and their ethical and professional conduct in accordance with legislation and board policy.

- Directors of education are charged with the supervision of principals in the interpretation and execution of the principalship.

- Saskatchewan principals are certified teachers who are educated about the roles of principals and teachers through teacher education and educational administration programs.

- All Saskatchewan principals, in publicly funded schools, are members of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation as a condition of their employment and are subject to the Code of Ethics and Code of Collective Conduct as set out in the Bylaws of the S.T.F. As members of the STF, principals are obligated to follow the collective agreements.

- Most principals voluntarily belong to organizations and groups that advance the work of school-based administrators and promote the beliefs, goals and ideas of their members.

In Saskatchewan, the Saskatchewan Learning, SSTA, LEADS, STF, professional education programs for teachers and administrators, Boards of education, as well as the individual communities in which the principalship resides, all contribute to principals' understanding of their role. The result is a challenge and an opportunity for Saskatchewan principals. It is the mutual understanding and acceptance created through the definition process that allows the principal to play a strong, relevant, and productive role in our complex system of public education.

There are many variables in each school and community that demand different responses in shaping the principalship. The variables include the size of the school, the composition of the staff, the needs of the students, the assistance of other in-school administrators, relationships with the director, board and community, the nature of the community, and last but not least, the talents, interests and experiences that each principal brings to the job. While each principalship is unique, it is possible to identify some aspects of the principal's role that are common to virtually every school situation. It is these threads in common that form the basis for the following discussion of the nature and dimensions of the principal's role.

The Nature of the Principal's Role: Leadership

Leadership

The descriptor most often used in speaking about the role of the principal is "leader". The leadership provided by principals has been analyzed and defined in numerous ways, but it is clear in every definition that the principal is expected to spearhead activities that develop the school as a learning organization. For example, consensus needs to be reached about school values and priorities. Clear, achievable goals need to be set on the basis of sound information and then communicated to teachers, students, parents, and community members. In order to achieve those goals, the school needs to be organized, and a school climate needs to be created that enhances the quality of student learning. All stakeholders need to be involved in appropriate processes of consultation and collaboration that result in effective structures, policies, and procedures supported by the school community. Advocacy is needed in a variety of forums to promote the interests of students, the school, and public education. In the wide spectrum of decision- and policy-making processes that shape the school experience of students, the principal has a core leadership function.

The role of the principal is evolving towards the principal as instructional and facilitative leader. The contemporary model is one of collaboration and collegiality where the principal is a leader of others – a facilitator who empowers others. In a collaborative model of leadership, responsibility may be delegated, but the principal remains accountable.

The principal is by no means the only individual who provides school-based leadership. Many people are called upon to provide leadership in various ways, including students, parents and staff. Within the student body, shared leadership is encouraged as a means of empowering students to develop strong organizational and leadership skills. Within District Boards of Trustees and Local School Advisory Committees, shared leadership builds partnerships to advocate for the school and the school program. With a school staff, shared leadership is recognized as a desirable means of empowering individuals, building a strong instructional team, developing a dynamic school program, and encouraging staff members to develop their knowledge and skills. Principals understand that the function of leadership is demanding and multifaceted. Leadership must be shared if the school is to provide an effective education for every student. Shared leadership does not diminish the prescribed responsibility of the principal as set out in legislation and board policy, rather it speaks to the fact that effective principals are adept at bringing out the leadership capabilities of others within the school and community.

The ability to resolve conflicts personally and to facilitate conflict resolution is a key role of the principal. Differences of opinion are inevitable. Effective principals intentionally develop their skills in consensus building, problem solving and conflict resolution so they are better able to facilitate the creation of common understandings and respect among all individuals in the school community.

Having acknowledged that school-based leadership is not restricted to the principalship, it is important to assert that leadership is an inherent, defining characteristic of the principal's role. The principal assumes primary responsibility for what takes place within a school, represents the school within the education system, and is widely regarded as the face of education in the community. Whether proactively guiding the school forward, or responding to crises principals are recognized leaders by virtue of their position, and their obligation to ensure effective leadership encompasses all the dimensions of their role.

The Dimensions of the Principal's Role

1. Developing Vision and Direction

Developing a
Vision and Direction

The principal is responsible for developing a shared vision and sense of direction within a school in accordance with provincial legislation, the vision, policies, and procedures established by the board of education, and administrative directives within the school division. The steps in this development process may include:

- clarifying the school's purpose,
- articulating the values and ethical principles that guide educational decisions,
- identifying needs and priorities,
- acquiring data necessary for informed decision-making,
- developing long-term plans,
- setting achievable goals and monitoring progress towards them,
- managing change and encouraging renewal,
- establishing and implementing school policies,
- communicating school policies and goals,
- creating collaborative processes for making decisions and solving problems, and
- accounting for decisions and directions within the school.

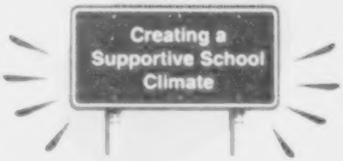
The principal's responsibility for providing leadership does not imply that the principal takes the steps listed above and personally determines the vision and direction of the school. Effective principals work with school staffs towards achieving consensus among all stakeholders so that there is general ownership for school decisions and respect for the processes by which they are determined. A large part of a principal's success in this dimension of the role rests on the ability to establish processes of collaboration and consultation that encourage students, parents, teachers, other school personnel, trustees, and community members to provide appropriate leadership in developing the vision and direction of the school. The principal is instrumental in ensuring that collaborative decision-making imbues the work of the school with harmony, commitment, and meaning for all stakeholders.

Part of the process of developing vision and direction is keeping the school a vital, contributing part of the larger system of education. Principals need to be open to beneficial ideas and influences that come from other schools in the division, around the province, or beyond our borders. They need to take into account all data and information available to guide educational policy implementation and practice. Embracing collaboration with other schools, educational jurisdictions, and human service agencies, is a core responsibility of principals that ensures they and their schools remain current and consonant with the education system as whole.

2. Creating a Supportive School Climate

The principal is responsible for facilitating the creation of a climate within the school that reflects the values and ethical principles identified as important to the education of all students. Typically, these values and principles indicate what students, teachers, and others should feel and perceive when they are in contact with the school. They include:

- a child-centred school focus, in which all staff are advocates for children,
- support for diversity and commitment to equity,
- a safe, nurturing environment,
- attention to students' needs for supervision and care,
- healthy, pleasant surroundings conducive to learning,
- celebration of successes and achievements,
- a collaborative culture,
- openness and communication, and
- visibility and accessibility on the part of teachers and administrators.



The principal works to put in place any programs, processes and personnel necessary to make the school a supportive place for all members of the school community.

Since conflicts and crises inevitably arise within any school, the principal ensures that the school is able to respond to them with mediation, counselling, and other services that resolve tensions, provide guidance, and maintain a positive school atmosphere. Policies and procedures for the management of student behaviour need to be developed collaboratively, communicated clearly to students, parents, and teachers, and implemented consistently throughout the school.

Attention to the many details that create a supportive school climate is a dimension of the principal's role that fundamentally promotes learning within the school. The work of teachers and students is enhanced when they feel supported and are not distracted by needs unrelated to teaching and learning.

Supporting
Teaching and
Learning

3. Supporting Teaching and Learning

The principal is responsible for promoting a primary focus on student learning within the school. When principals are actively involved in and supportive of the instructional program, they send a strong message to the entire school community about the importance of teaching and learning.

The fact that principals are professional teachers facilitates their collaboration with the school staff in organizing the school for instruction. Although they may not have in-depth knowledge of every aspect of the instructional program, they are generally familiar with matters such as:

- the provincial curriculum,
- school division policies and programs related to instruction,
- resource-based learning, including the use of learning technologies,
- instructional strategies and approaches,
- individualization of instruction,
- evaluation and reporting of student achievement,
- services and supports available to enhance instruction,
- approaches and techniques for staff supervision,
- research into instruction, and
- instructional trends and innovations.

Many principals spend some portion of their time on classroom instruction. Regardless of whether or not they teach, principals make major contributions to teaching and learning through their understanding of instruction and their support for teachers and other members of the instructional team. Effective principals actively supervise the performance of teaching colleagues and other personnel; they monitor the effectiveness of the instructional program, ensuring that it is consistent with goals and policies developed by the province, the school division, and the school; and they also develop instructional leadership within the school, support new ideas, identify and obtain necessary resources, and provide staff members with an efficient organizational framework for instructional activities.

4. Embedding the School in the Community

Embedding the School in Community

Principals are charged with building a strong relationship between the school and the community in a way that is consistent with provincial legislation, board policies, and administrative directives. It has long been understood that there is a strong connection between students' success at school and the degree to which parents are involved in their education. More recently, calls for greater accountability and relevance in education have underlined the need for schools to respond in a balanced, appropriate way to the expectations of parents, employers, taxpayers, special interest groups, and Aboriginal peoples. At a time when society and schools are changing rapidly, it is an increasingly important dimension of the principal's role to ensure that the school does not operate in isolation but is embedded in the life of both the local community and the larger community served by the system of public education in Saskatchewan.

The principal's role includes facilitating communication, consultation and collaboration with parents/caregivers, the larger community and other human service organizations that work with children and families.

- *Parents/Caregivers* – Increased parental involvement in education often means greater achievement for students. Principals collaborate with school staff and parents/caregivers to identify meaningful ways that families can be partners in their children's education – involvement that will benefit students and promote learning. Communication with parents is two-way. The principal and school staff provide parents with information about students' success and challenges and respond to parents' questions and ideas concerning their children.

- *The Larger Community* – A strong relationship between the school and the larger community can be of mutual benefit. Principals use a variety of approaches to strengthen the bonds between school and community. Often the instructional program becomes an avenue for bringing parents and community members into the school as resource people, tutors and volunteers. The community itself provides a venue for field trips and real-life learning. Principals may provide school facilities and services to support community events and organizations. Others recognize that the school can contribute to development of the community, and they work to tie the school program to identified economic or social needs.

- *Other Human Service Organizations* – Schools are one of the community organizations that work with children and families. The SchoolPLUS model speaks to the importance of a partnership between the school and these other agencies – it speaks to the need for integrated human services – and it speaks to the importance of schools and principals providing the leadership to ensure that all student needs are addressed. The principal's role includes leading the way in working with other agencies and facilitating integration of services. In the Provincial Response to the Role of the School Task Force Final Report, entitled Securing Saskatchewan's Future, released in February 2002 the Government agreed that the role of the schools had changed and schools today have two primary functions:

- To education children and youth – developing the whole child, intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically; and,
- To support service delivery – schools service as centres at the community level for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice and other services for children and their families.

Effective principals collaborate with the school staff, parents and community to develop and communicate the dimensions of the relationship between the school and the community.

The establishment of effective leadership processes with all stakeholders is a key responsibility of the principal. Principals focus on two-way – strategies that allow the school to give accurate information about the school and public education to students, parents, boards and committees, and that seek input from these same groups. Meetings, reports, newsletters, websites, television programs and school events all are used in various situations. Sometimes principals are called upon to act as professional advocates providing each school community with an understanding of educational issues and student needs.

5. Developing an Effective School Team

Developing an
Effective
School Team

In most schools, the principal is responsible for all personnel working under the auspices of the school to support the education of students. School personnel are diverse. They include employees of the school division, e.g., administrators, teachers, teacher associates, specialists, coordinators, technicians, secretaries, custodians, and other support staff. They may also include shared services and interagency personnel. A vital dimension of the principal's role is the development of the school staff to meet the educational needs of students and the integration of all personnel into an effective school team.

The principal's responsibility in this area includes the supervision and development of the school staff in accordance with school division policies and administrative directives. Principals actively supervise the performance of teachers and school-based administrators, provide them with counseling, and support their professional growth in relationship to the development of the instructional program and their personal professional development needs. They also supervise, evaluate, counsel, and provide development opportunities for a wide range of other school personnel. Principals strive to ensure that the work of each member of the school team is supported with adequate working conditions, resources, and organizational support. The maintenance of high staff morale and high standards of performance is a major, on-going concern of principals. In this dimension of their role, they act as both a member of the school team and an agent for the boards of education who employ most personnel working in the schools.

As the "community education" approach to education becomes more prevalent in Saskatchewan, principals are devoting more time and energy to collaboration with a variety of agencies providing services to children and families. Workers from health, social services, and justice agencies frequently work alongside teachers and other school personnel to meet the needs of students in a holistic way that supports their education. In this collaboration, principals are challenged to maintain the instructional focus of the school, coordinate the efforts of various personnel working with students, and meld a diverse staff into a strong, effective school team.

6. Managing School Resources

Managing
School
Resources

Principals must ensure that administrative systems and policies are in place to handle each aspect of school management. To varying degrees, depending on the size of the school and the policies of the school division, principals are expected to provide for the management of money, human resources, facilities, equipment, services, and educational supplies. They may also be involved in fund-raising, partnerships, and other activities that extend school resources.

Principals work in consultation and collaboration with school personnel and school division administrators to make sure that all management tasks are carried out in a timely, appropriate manner. Either personally or indirectly, they are responsible for school-based decisions with respect to such matters as school finances, resource allocation, schedules and timetables, staff assignments, purchasing, student services, reporting, and record keeping.

Beginning a Career - Embarking on the Journey

I moved my stuff over to the new school today. Gave my old school keys to Harold and closed that chapter of my career. A few tears, lots of hugs, and I take with me many wonderful memories of the past.

As I was packing this week, I took a look at the collection of materials, presents, letters, etc. that I have carried with me in my teaching career. Many of the things I moved I really don't use any more, but they are kind of like my security blanket - telling me that indeed I am a teacher and that, above all else, is why I am here.

The staff at the new school are young and enthusiastic teachers. I hope I have the energy to keep up with them! But it was the older, more experienced teachers that shared with me their moments and stories of their students. Perhaps the older teachers have learned the value of memories. I know when I was a baby teacher - I couldn't wait until summer vacation - jump in the car and take off for parts unknown with friends and family. I didn't look or ponder at the collection of goods from the previous year. I didn't even keep class photos of my classes - something I regret now.

Am I nervous? Yes. Am I excited? Yes. Am I humble? Perhaps more now than I have been ever before. I am the leader - people will look to me for the answers to their concerns and questions. I won't know all the answers and I have to keep telling myself that I never will. That is why we are a school - teamwork. I hope I am up to the task ...

Planning for Leadership

Leadership

Introduction 16

What Others Say About Leadership 19

Personal Reflections: Discovering Your Leadership Persona . . . 20

What Do Team Members Want In A Leader? 22

Facilitating Change 23

- The Implementation Dip 23
- Redefining Resistance 23
- The Complexity Of Change 23

Resources 24

Travel Kit 25

Planning for Leadership

Introduction

The Education Act (1995) Section 175 (1p) says the principal shall;

- exercise leadership in co-operation with the director and the board of education or the conseil scolaire in the promotion of public involvement in educational planning directed towards the improvement of education in the school and in the school division or the francophone education area.

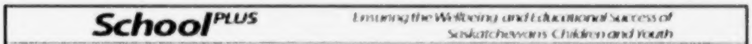
Education Act (1995)

Interested in researching policies in place in other Saskatchewan divisions or other Canadian jurisdictions? The following websites have a number of them on file.

http://www.cepan.ca
http://www.ssta.sk.ca

The Role of the Principal

- The role of the principal is most often characterized as that of leader
- It is understood that the multi-faceted, demanding nature of the role requires that leadership be shared to facilitate an effective education for students. Students, parents, and all staff members can all be expected to share in the leadership of the school.
- Principals are generally responsible for what happens in schools and are viewed as the public presence of education within the community
- Because of their position principals are recognized as leaders and obliged to provide that leadership.



School^{PLUS} *Ensuring the Wellbeing and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth*

What Do We Hope to Achieve

Goals

1. ***All* Saskatchewan children and young people have access to the supports they need for school and life success.**
2. **Shared responsibility for the wellbeing and education for children and youth.**
3. **A harmonious and shared future with Aboriginal peoples.**
4. **High quality services and supports, linked to schools at the community level.**
5. **Strengthened capacity within the Provincial education system and high quality learning programs.**

School Division Policy and Leadership

As you think about leadership in your school, take a few minutes to remind yourself of some of the descriptors used in your school division policy and jot them down in the box below.

Policy and Practice Direction from My School Division

- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________
- ____________________

Schools today require an alternative approach to leadership—one characterized by adaptability, that is, responding to challenges and issues that require new learning, new behaviours and new organizational structures. Such leadership recognizes and values the diversity found in contemporary schools and opens windows of opportunity for many individuals in the educational community to enact leadership. We call this **adaptive leadership**, and it requires leadership, both enacted by the formal leaders and that provided by the leadership distributed throughout the organization, to be based on four important leadership behaviours:

- Identifying the adaptive challenge;
- Communicating the urgency of the adaptive challenge;
- Establishing a broad understanding of the circumstances creating the challenge;
- Mobilizing others with the organization to help find the way forward – giving the work back to the people.

Practiced in our current educational environment in Saskatchewan, Adaptive leadership ideally results in the development of a **learning community**. The learning community is a place of reflection, inquiry, discourse, sharing and risk-taking, where its members' motivation to engage in these processes is a desire to learn and to collaboratively seek better ways of doing things. Adaptive leadership includes a number of key elements that assist in achieving this end:

1. Developing a clear mission and vision
2. Building capacity for a learning community
3. Developing collaborative and distributed leadership
4. Fostering change and renewal
5. Enhancing staff support
6. Building bridges and networks
7. Developing a culture of equity.

Saskatchewan Learning, 2003.

Things I Wish I'd known in My First Year!

- Find a mentor you respect and stick to them like glue. Listen and learn and then listen some more.

- Never come to work with an agenda or plan that can't be changed. It only leads to frustration at the end of the day when you didn't touch your "to do" list. **Students and staff come first; paper work will eventually get done!**

- Make time to write notes of appreciation to staff, students, and parents.

- When things become overwhelming, spend time in the kindergarten room. They are learning the ropes for the first time too. You can learn a lot from kindergarten kids

- Learn to say, "You know, I'm new at this. Let me find out and get back to you." **Then make sure you do it!**

- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____
- ____

What Others Say About Leadership

Much has been written about leadership in general and educational leadership in particular. Much of what has been said centres on the unpredictable and often ill-defined nature of living systems like schools and school systems.

"Instead of looking for saviors we should be calling for leadership that will challenge us to face problems for which there are no simple painless solutions-problems that require us to learn new ways."(Heifetz, 1994, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*)

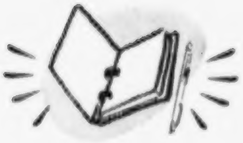
What new things am I learning about that might help our school with the challenges we face?

"Recent scientific evidence shows convincingly that more patient, less deliberate modes are particularly suited to making sense of situations that are intricate, shadowy or ill-defined." (Claxton, 1997, *Hare Brain and Tortoise Mind*)

"The heart of leadership has to do with what a person believes, values, dreams about and is committed to... The head of leadership has to do with the theories of practice each of us has developed over time and our ability to reflect on the situations we face in light of those theories... The hand of leadership has to do with the actions we take, the decisions we make." (Sergiovanni, 1995, *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective*)

Personal Reflections: Discovering your Leadership Persona

Whether you are new to this leadership role or are considering your professional growth as an experienced principal, thinking about and understanding your views on leadership is critical.



Questions for Reflection

- *Who are the leaders that I most admire?*
- *What qualities do I admire about those leaders?*

Leader	Admirable Qualities
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•
•	•

- *What are the leadership qualities that I bring to this position?*

- *What have been some of my most memorable leadership experiences?*

- *Looking back on these experiences what specifically has made them memorable?*

- *What did I learn from these experiences?*

- *What opportunities exist for me to better understand my leadership style: SSBA Modules, SELU programs, graduate classes, others…*

"I think integrity is really important because, as I tell kids, at the end of the day, it's not like a suit of clothes that you can put on when you think it serves your interest and you can take it off when you think it no longer serves your interest. It is either something that people recognize about you, that that's who and what you say you are. When I've been disappointed by people in the past, it's been when they've not had a level of integrity."

> **Wanted: A miracle worker** who can do more with less, pacify rival groups, endure chronic second guessing, tolerate low levels of support, process large volumes of paper and work double shifts (75 nights a year). He or she will have carte blanche to innovate, but cannot spend much money, replace any personnel, or upset any constituency.
>
> *Evans, 1995*

How would you describe your job?

The joys of the principalship:

"My colleagues who don't need or want recognition but just quietly go about doing their job in an ethical manner."

"I think being with people and seeing people grow and learn and be successful and also have some setbacks but it's really all about the little things, you know it's not any one big pivotal event, it's all the little things that happen in the day that are good things happening to the kids."

What do team members want in a leader?

- A leader who selectively reveals their weaknesses
- A leader who trusts intuition
- A leader who leads with tough empathy
- A leader who shows what is unique about themselves

-Goffee And Jones (2000)

Facilitating Change

Clearly, the need to keep improving schools speaks to the role of the principal as change agent or facilitator of the change process. Introducing and implementing new initiatives requires some knowledge of the change process and how to smooth the progress of that change. Fullan (2001) speaks about what is needed to understand the change process. He points out six things to remember.

a) The goal is not to innovate the most
b) It is not enough to have the best ideas
c) Appreciate the implementation dip
d) Redefine resistance
e) Reculturing is the name of the game
f) Never a checklist, always complexity

Of these six, three that speak particularly to educational change are understanding the "implementation dip", redefining resistance and the complexity of change.

The Implementation Dip

Transition Checklist

All new ideas that are worth implementing often require that people ask questions about and even change their behaviour and beliefs. It's not unusual for those who are in the midst of implementing new ideas to feel anxious, overwhelmed, and without the necessary skills to do the job. Effective leaders remain calm in the face of the bumps that might occur during the first year of embarking on a major innovation or new direction.

Things to remember during the Implementation Dip:

- Paying attention to people
- Focusing on building emotional bonds
- Building relationships
- Healing rifts
- Modeling enthusiasm, self-confidence and clarity of vision

Redefining Resistance

Often those who resist new ideas have a lot to teach. Building relationships with those who voice differences of opinion is a necessary step in implementing change. Effective leadership encourages a balance of inquiry and advocacy – even on the toughest issues.

"It's not so much that we're afraid of change, or so in love with the old ways, it's like being between trapezes. It's Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There is nothing to hold on to."
Marilyn Ferguson

"Remember – it is almost never a good idea to turn our back on something in which people are investing so much energy."
(Kegan & Laskow-Lahay, 2001)

The Complexity of Change

Tempting as it may be to look for neat step-by-step procedures for implementing change, what is more useful, according to Fullan, is to "know that change is a process not an event" (2001, p. 40). Understanding the complexity of change is essential.

"Living systems ...cannot be directed along a linear path. Unforeseen consequences are inevitable. The challenge is to disturb them in a manner that approximates the desired outcomes."
(Pascale et al., 2001, p. 6.)

Resources

Claxton, G. (1997). *Hare Brain and Tortoise Mind*. London, ON: Fourth Estate.

Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading In A Culture of Change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Goffee, R., Jones, G. (2000). "Why Should Anyone Be Led By You?" *Harvard Business Review*: Boston, MA, pages 63-70.

Heifetz, R. (1994). *Leadership Without Easy Answers*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Pascale, R.T., Milleman, M, Gioja, L. (2000). *Surfing The Edge Of Chaos*. New York, NY: Crown Business.

Sergiovanni, T.J. (1995). *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Planning for Leadership

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Planning for Leadership

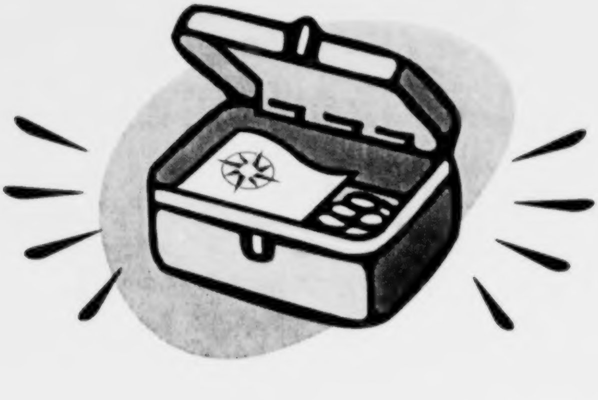
2. Reflections on Leadership

3. Personal Consideration

4. Direction Setting

5. The Paradox of the Contemporary Principalship

6. Transition Checklist

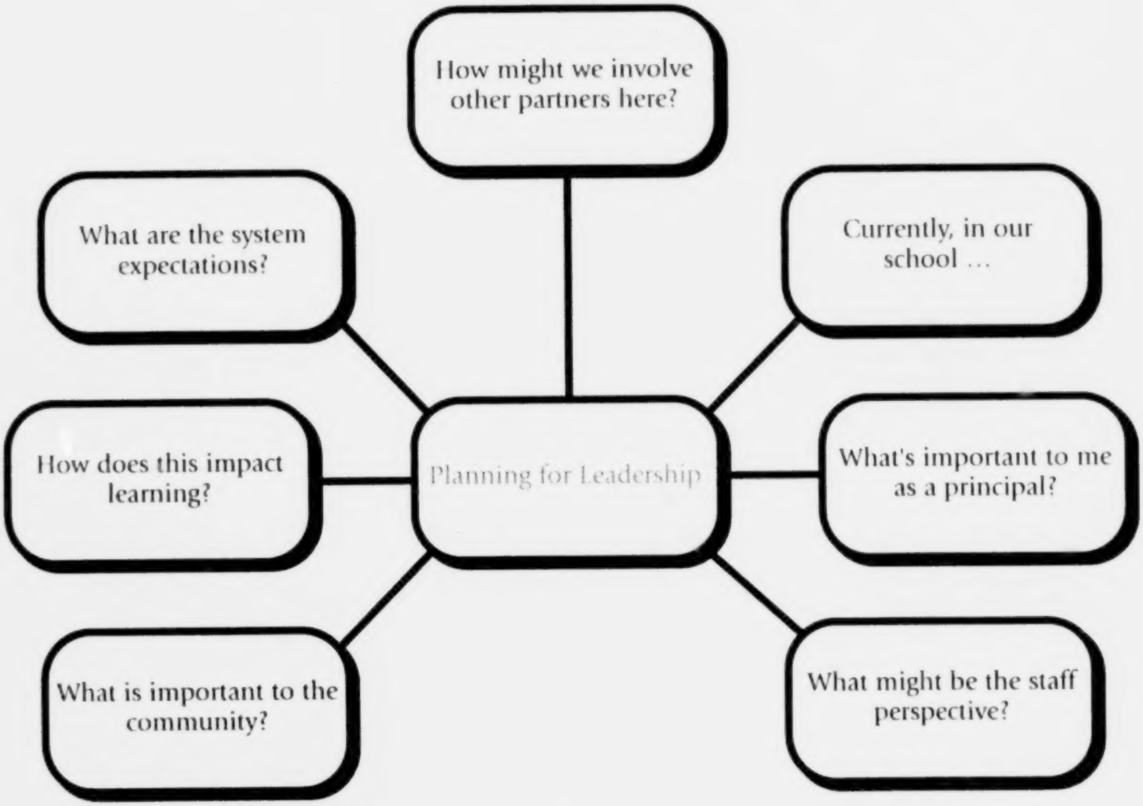


Flexibility: Planning for Leadership

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Planning for Leadership.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school …
How does this impact learning?
Planning for Leadership
What's important to me as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Planning for Leadership

Reflections on Leadership

Leadership is the capacity to create a compelling and plausible vision and translate that vision into organizational reality.

Bennis and Townsend, 1995

The growth and development of people is a leader's highest calling.

Maxwell, 1995

The ultimate test of leadership is results.

Bennis, 1997

The foundation of effective leadership is thinking through the organization's mission, defining it and establishing it, clearly and visibly.

Drucker, 1992

Leaders of the best performing organizations ... see themselves as shapers and keepers of performance-oriented cultures.

Heskette and Schlesinger, 1996

Developing shared vision is the daily work of leaders. It is ongoing and never ending.

Senge, 1990

The key issues of leadership are issues of purpose ("What is our business?"), issues of culture ("How can we create a better environment to achieve our purpose?"), issues of process and performance ("How do we establish our norms and standards and what processes help us to meet the standards?"), and issues of people ("How do we attract and retain the right people?").

Champy, 1995

Leadership defines what the future should look like, aligns people with that vision, and inspires them to make it happen despite the obstacles. Leadership produces change.

Kotter, 1996

Leaders challenge the status quo by searching for opportunities and taking risks, inspire a shared vision by envisioning the future and enlisting others, enable others to act by fostering collaboration and strengthening others, model the way by setting the example, and encourage the heart by recognizing individual contributions and celebrating accomplishments.

Kouzes and Posner, 1987

The Paradox of the Contemporary Principalship

Read the following paragraphs and consider the validity of the assertion that principals are often pulled in competing directions. Can you cite examples from your own experience?

What is the role of the contemporary school principal? While much has been written on the subject, principals who review the literature in the hopes of enhancing their effectiveness are likely to be confused by apparently contradictory findings. Principals have been called upon to be strong leaders and to give away power to others, to celebrate the success of their school, and to perpetuate discontent with the status quo; to convey urgency regarding the need for school improvement and to demonstrate the patience that sustains improvement efforts over the long haul; to encourage individual autonomy and to insist on adherence to the school's mission, vision, values, and goals; to build widespread support for change and to push forward with improvement despite resistance; to approach improvement incrementally and to promote the aggressive, comprehensive shake up necessary to escape the bonds of traditional school cultures. They have been portrayed as middle managers in the school division hierarchy and as leaders of their respective buildings. They have been lauded as the critical element in a school improvement initiative and criticized for making their schools overly dependent upon them.

The contemporary principalship represents a paradox, two competing demands that pull principals in seemingly opposite directions.

Adapted from *The Principal Series*, ASCD (1998)

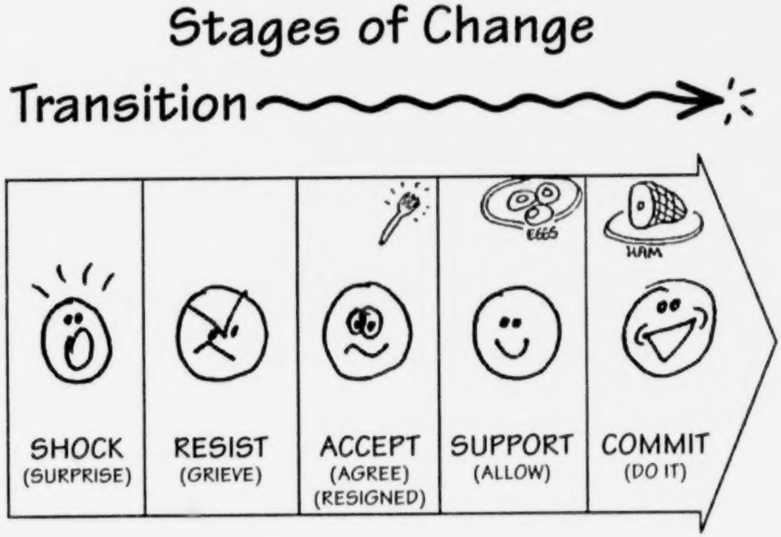
Personal considerations that have or are currently influencing my direction as a leader.

Four reasons why individual members don't embrace change

They don't:	**Intervention:**
1. Have the ability	Training and development
2. Know of the change	Communication
3. Believe the change	Actions of initiators/administration
4. Agree with the change	Involve in the decision making

Two conditions for individual behaviour change:

1. Learning has to occur
2. Motivation to apply learning has to exist


Stages of Change
Transition
EGGS
HAM
SHOCK
(SURPRISE)
RESIST
(GRIEVE)
ACCEPT
(AGREE)
(RESIGNED)
SUPPORT
(ALLOW)
COMMIT
(DO IT)

Another way to assess the group you are leading through the change process is to figure out where the energy is … and then mobilize it. People will be at different stages of transition at different times. Resistance may be just feedback about the pace of change. Getting people to acceptance requires time to talk, interact in a useful way, acknowledge feelings and include everyone in the planning process.

A Transition Checklist

✓ Take your time

✓ Seek temporary arrangements

✓ Don't act for the sake of acting

✓ Accept discomfort

✓ Take care of yourself

✓ Explore the other side of change

✓ Talk to someone

✓ Be creative

✓ Be ready for new learnings

✓ Recognize the shape of transition

Making Sense of Life's Changes: Transitions, William Bridges, 1980

Developing Vision and Direction

Developing a
Vision and Direction

Introduction 32

Vision And Direction 33

The Importance Of Vision – A School Trustee's Story 35

Ways To Develop A Vision 36

Reflections For The Principal In The Visioning Process 37

Mission Statements 38

Sample Mission Statements 39

School Goals 40

Activities For Your School 42

Before School Opens 42

Fall 46

Winter 48

Spring 49

Developing Vision and Direction: School Activities at a Glance 50

Resources 51

Travel Kit 52

Introduction

The Role of the Principal

The principal is responsible for developing a shared vision and sense of direction within a school in accordance with provincial legislation, the vision, policies, and procedures established by the board of education, and administrative directives within the school division.

Developing vision and direction for yourself and the school which you serve are big jobs. This section will discuss practical ways to provide leadership in developing vision and direction.

"The responsibility for vision building is a collective, not an individual one. Collaboration should mean creating the vision together, not complying with the principal's own (or any other single group's). All stakeholders (support staff too) should be involved. The articulation of different voices may create initial conflict, but this should be confronted and worked through. It is part of the collaboration process." (Fullan and Hargreaves, 1997)

School Division Policy and Visioning

As you think about working through the process of developing a vision for your school community, consider what your school division has to say on the subject. Record any ideas in the box provided.

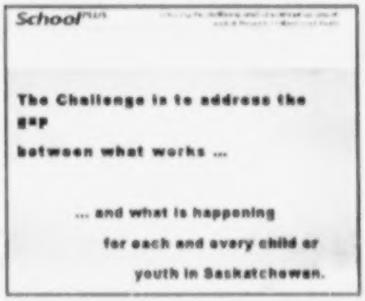
Policies and Practices from my School Division

-
-
-
-
-

Saskatchewan Learning strongly endorses the vision for School^{PLUS} proposed by the Role of the School Task Force. We agree that the role of schools has changed and that schools today have two primary functions:

- **to educate children and youth** – developing the whole child, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically; and,
- **to support service delivery** – schools serve as centres at the community level for the delivery of appropriate social, health, recreation, culture, justice, and other services for children and families.

Securing Saskatchewan's Future: Ensuring the Well Being and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth, Provincial Response, February 2000.


School^{PLUS}

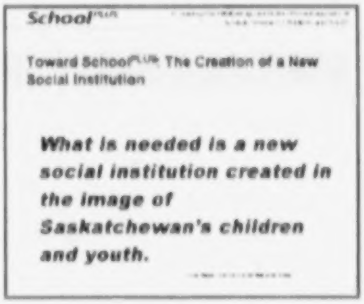
The Challenge is to address the gap

between what works ...

... and what is happening

for each and every child or

youth in Saskatchewan.


School^{PLUS}

Toward School^{PLUS}: The Creation of a New Social Institution

What is needed is a new social institution created in the image of Saskatchewan's children and youth.

Vision and Direction

Developing a vision for the school community can be an exciting process. Encouraging members of the educational community to share their vision of a preferred future can be a positive team-building and bonding experience with the outcome being an enhanced educational environment for all educational partners.

Vision

"A mental image of a better and more hopeful future"
-Deal and Peterson, p.101

"Visions are magnets that draw us to the future."
-Stephanson, 1994, p. 94

"May be called a set of core values or guiding principles."
SSTA, 1997, p.96

F.A.Q. **"What is the process that will start you off in creating a vision? How do you create direction? How do you involve all stakeholders? How do you collect data to make effective decision making? How do you change the vision if it's thought required? How do you address immediate and long-term goals? What is vision?"**

?
Information Here

Consider:
In education today, many school divisions encourage principals to develop visioning documents that will guide the practices of the school. Creating a vision forces us to take a stand for a preferred future. A vision should be idealistic, should capture our imagination, and help us to connect with each other in meaningful ways.

?
Information Here

Visions can be:

- spiritual
- idealistic
- realistic yet ambitious
- dreams
- focused on children
- a star; a compass

A vision must be:

- realistic
- clear
- compelling
- revisited often

-Dufour (2000)

F.A.Q. Do I have to create the vision myself?

Consider:
Not at all! There are a number of ways of inviting others into the visioning process.

Consider including the following educational partners when planning focus groups, surveys, or town hall meetings:

- Students, including former students or upcoming students
- Parents
- Local Board, Parent/School Advisory Council, Division Board members
- Business people and/or Chamber of Commerce members
- Mayor and Council
- Service Groups – Lions, Lionelles, Legion, etc.
- Seniors
- Clergy, RCMP, representatives from Health
- Neighbours (people who live close to the school)
- Community heroes
- People who have challenged you and/or the school in the past

Beliefs and Values

The process of developing a vision is based in the shared beliefs and values of all educational partners in the community. Consider the following questions when discussing beliefs and values. Do this process in a large group setting and record words verbatim.

- What do we/I believe about children?
- What do we/I believe about teaching and learning?
- What do we/I believe about our school and its place in the lives of our children?
- What do we value most in our work as educators?
- How do we see, hear and feel these values in our school? How would we like to see, hear and feel them?

A key element of Adaptive Leadership is; Developing a Clear Mission and Vision

- The school and its community must undertake a focused process to identify their mission and vision.
- Leaders take a large share of the responsibility for facilitating, articulating and modeling the direction and purpose of the school.
- Leadership requires articulating the values and norms that advance the learning of all members in the community.
- A shared mission and vision guide a learning community and it is a leadership responsibility to ensure that the mission and vision are displayed and understood by all its members.

Sask. Learning, 2003

The Importance of Vision – a School Trustee's Story

"About eight years ago, a new principal came to our school. One of the new administrator's goals was to develop community involvement in the school as well as to develop a vision and mission statement for the school that would be supported by everyone. A general invitation was sent out in the school newsletter to all parents and community members to attend this meeting. Also, a small committee of school staff phoned parents and community members to invite them to this meeting.

By far the largest turnout of parents and community members was from those who had received a personal invitation to attend. There still were not lots of us in attendance, but those of us who were there felt that our time was well spent.

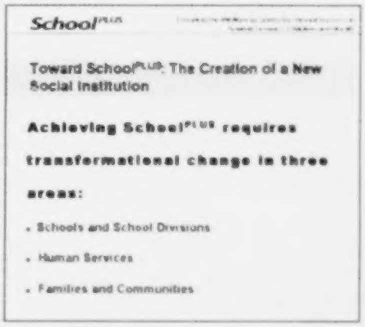
We were actively involved in the development of vision and mission statements. We spent some time as a large group, brainstorming the important elements of both a vision and mission statement. Then we broke up into small groups of five or six made up of teaching and support staff, community members and students to develop some possible scenarios.

We all worked together to come up with a clear statement which we then brought back to the larger group. At a second meeting, after some sharing and some fine-tuning, we all voted on the statement that best suited our needs. It was clear to me that the principal and the staff had taken a risk to include us in the process. At the end of the day we had a vision and mission statement in which everyone took ownership.

It is time to do this again. Eight years have gone by since that process. There are lots of new families in our school and community. We have a new school administration, many of the staff members have changed, and all of the students involved have long since graduated from our school. This needs to be an evergreen process."

Resources to Remember

- *School-Based Planning*, Stephanson (1994)
- *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook*, P. Senge et al (1994)
- Leading the Learning Community, SSTA Leadership Development Program
- SSBA Module Two – Saskatchewan School-Based Administrator's Professional Development Program
- *Adaptive School: A Source Book For Developing Collaborative Groups*, Garmston and Wellman (1999)



School^{PLUS}

Toward School^{PLUS}: The Creation of a New Social Institution

Achieving School^{PLUS} requires transformational change in three areas:

- Schools and School Divisions
- Human Services
- Families and Communities

Ways To Develop A Vision

Don't try to tackle the vision first thing! Give yourself time to explore and learn about the school and community first.

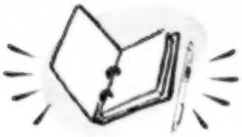
How does a school come to have a vision? It is likely that your school already has a vision. However, perhaps it has never been talked about, written down or formalized. Here are some ways in which your school may have acquired its vision.

How Can a School Develop a Vision?

	Advantages	Disadvantages
Inherit a vision or, "We've always done it that way!"	Saves time and energy.	Limits growth and change.
Explicate a vision, or "what we believe in around here."	Existing vision is working and comfortable.	Limits creative thinking and questioning.
Refine a vision, or, "we've got one that works: how can we make it better?"	Practical and easy at the surface level.	Does not allow for dialogue and reflection.
Borrow a vision, or, "We like theirs- let's use that one."	Capitalizes on the craft knowledge and expertise of other educators.	No involvement: people haven't talked about their values and what's important to them.
Inflict a vision, or, "here's what you will believe in your school."	Uniformity in language and intent.	No involvement from stakeholders.
Hire a vision, or, "We'll hire a principal with a vision that fits our school division."	Exposure to new ideas.	Fosters dependency and powerlessness or apathy.
Homogenize a vision, or, "Let's all contribute ideas and then come up with something we can agree on."	Common vision with everyone's input.	Limits fresh thinking. Could respond to the lowest common denominator.
Grow a vision, or, "Let's create our own vision!"	Reflects group's best thinking, beliefs, values. Process is genuine and inclusive. Honors each person. Enriches school culture.	Process is muddy. Takes time and patience.

Adapted from: Roland Barth, *Learning from the Heart (2001)*

The Visioning Process



- *In what ways do my thoughts, words and deeds represent my vision for myself as a principal?*

- *Are there some gaps and how can I find out?*

- *In what ways am I sharing my vision …*

… with my colleagues?

… with our educational partners?

- *What happens if my vision is not in harmony with that of other partners?*

- *How might I use any tension between conflicting visions as an opportunity for dialogue and learning?*

- *Who might assist me in clarifying and celebrating our vision?*

- *What kinds of events or milestones in the life of our school are good vehicles for revisiting our vision and mission?*

Mission Statements

Mission Statements

Mission or Purpose

"What the organization is here to do."
-Senge, 1994, p. 303

"A clear, concise statement of the school's
shared purpose and function."
-Stephanson, 1994, p. 87

While **vision** is defined as: "An image of a desired future" (Senge, 1994, p. 302), **mission statements** define what the school is there to do. Consider the following questions when clarifying the mission of the school.

- Why do we exist? What is our basic purpose?
- What is unique or distinctive about our school?
- Who are our principal clients?
- What are the norms, values and beliefs that guide our school?
- What is our mission?
- What influence does Directions, Core Curriculum, High School Review and School$^{\text{PLUS}}$ have on school mission?
- What is the desired future for our school?

"There's a difference between plunking something down on paper or sticking it up on a wall and having a sense of mission. That really is the key point. We are committed to excellence in a safe learning environment and if we are going to implement something that doesn't correspond with that, that's a contradiction that we can't have."

What is important about developing a mission for the school is that it be reasonable and empowering. Mission statements only have utility if the stakeholders understand them and buy into them. People need to know what the mission statement is. School personnel need to ensure that school policy and practice reflect these statements. Mission statements need to be prominent, on school letterhead, on report cards, displayed in hallways and classrooms.

A mission is:

- empowering
- meaningful
- value based
- powerful

"When we were building the mission statement we tried to get information from all staff because there are no unimportant people in the learning community, they're all important. They all have different roles but they are important to the organization. We did this so that everyone was buying into the concept that this is who and what we are, this is what we believe."

Sample Mission Statements:

Fairtown school is organized to provide quality instructional programming in a safe, positive environment that promotes respect for authority, self, others and property.

The mission of Smalltown school is to ensure that all students obtain the skills, abilities and attitudes to be lifelong learners and to be productive citizens who successfully compete in a changing global society.

The mission of Anytown school is to promote a healthy learning, working environment which will meet the social, emotional, and educational needs of those involved inside and outside of the school environment.

School Goals

Goals

"Milestones we expect to reach before too long."
-Senge, 1994, p.303

"Goals are dreams taken seriously."
-Stephanson, 1994, p.89

? Information
Here

F.A.Q. How do I develop goals for the school year?

Consider:
It is important for schools to establish goals for the year. Goals can encompass a range of objectives – to finish or continue work that has already been undertaken, address new work to be done, set vision and tone for the school. Schedule the goal setting workshop when all staff members can attend. Whatever the objective of the goal setting workshop, it is very important to do this every year.

Goal Setting

Goal setting workshops can be informal and relaxed. A strict protocol is not needed. However guidelines are needed in order to achieve desired results.

- Ensure all staff can attend. Include as many support staff as possible.

- Set objectives for goal setting workshop e.g. To list goals that we as a staff will undertake in this school year.

- Goals should be looked at in the big picture of the school year. Look at goals that were established last year. Were they completed or are some ongoing? Are there new goals that surface from previous goals?

- Goals need to be written. Include the following:
  - Goals are action statements – "This year we will …"
  - Goals have deadlines – "We will do this before Christmas."
  - Goals include who will do the action – "The teaching staff will …"
  - Goals include supports needed in order to carry out the action. i.e. Fiscal resources, human resources, time.

- Post the goals in the staff room, classrooms, offices, hallways. Include them in newsletters and reports to the local board, School/Parent Advisory Council, division board, parents.

- Establish a schedule for revisiting goals. Don't leave it until the end of the school year. Consider "quiet" times – mid-March, mid-May.

School goals are a part of long-range planning and will also be discussed under that heading in the Winter section of Dimension #1.

Tips for Goal Statements

- Keep them few in number.
- Link value statements directly to the vision statement.
- Be direct.
- Avoid platitudes.
- Focus on behaviors, not beliefs.
- Focus upon ourselves, not upon changing others. What commitments are we prepared to make to improve our school?

(DuFour and Eaker, 1998)

Activities For Your School

Before school opens:

Your "stump" speech

Principals need to consider their philosophy of education, their own personal professional goals, and school goals prior to the start of school. It is important to think about these things, write down what you can (sometimes words or phrases will be enough) and communicate them to as many educational partners as applicable so they have an understanding of you and what you are bringing to the leadership of the school.

Consider the following questions:

- I want our school to be a place where …
- The kind of school I would like my children to attend would be …
- When I leave this school, I would like to be remembered for …

Principals often are overwhelmed at the beginning of the school year with administrative tasks, leaving little time for reflection on visioning and direction. Try taking time over the summer months when hiking, fishing, gardening to think of what you stand for as a principal. Write down the words and phrases that have meaning for you. Use these words and phrases to develop a "stump" speech that you will deliver to applicable educational partners (for example, staff, school boards) at the beginning of the school year.

Your stump speech should include:

- what is really important to you in education
- what you, your school and the staff do really well
- what you would like to accomplish in that school year
- your dreams for your school
- your nightmares or things that worry you and challenge you

List words and phrases that may become part of your "Stump Speech"

-
-
-
-
-

The real value in doing this exercise is that you get to know yourself as a principal. By communicating this information to the staff they get to know you as well. They learn what you stand for as a principal and that information becomes the foundation of your work. Good Luck!

"Share your personal values with a new staff at the first staff meeting so that they know what you believe. Provide opportunities for all staff members to share their beliefs as well."

Meet and Greet

Begin the school year by establishing relationships. This is as important to the administrator new to a school or community as it is to one returning to the same setting. Go to the school. Meet with the caretaker, secretary, teacher librarian, guidance counselor, teachers who are in doing some work. Call your Vice-Principal, Director, Division Board Member, Local Board Chair, other principals in your area. Let them know you are available for a chat, coffee.

Meet with **vice-principal, assistant principal**. Establish duties such as playground/hallway supervision, calling subs, discipline. Establish schedule and division of administrative time allotment, review policies, procedures. Review opening day activities.

"My experience has shown me that very good things happen when you build relationships with people. I've also seen what happens when people have not tended to building relationships and thought that the organization could work by just doing the things that you have to do. I've seen people crash and burn because that's not what education is about. They maybe had excellent skills but they have to remember that you're working with people, you're working with kids and the more that you work hard at building those kinds of positive relationships the more the learning organization really takes off and grows."

Meet with **new staff and interns**. Consider a mentor or buddy system for supporting people new to the school. Provide as much information as early as possible – give them staff manuals, school policy handbooks, student handbooks, etc. so they can read them prior to the start of school, and prior to the first staff meeting when many of the things in these documents are discussed.

Meet with **teachers**. Find out what they need in their classroom and what supplies are needed. For example, curriculum guides, chalkboard erasers, etc.

Update the **substitute teacher list**. Contact each sub to say hello and find out what their plans are for the year and when they will be available/not available.

Plan an opening day **social function**. It can be as simple as muffins and coffee at morning break or an after-school get-together at your house. Go with what you are comfortable with. The effort will be appreciated.

Meet with **Resource Room/special education teacher(s)**. Discuss caseload for resource room, speech language therapy, students for whom IEPs are required (individual education plans), assignments for teacher assistants.

Administrative Tasks

Tour the school on your own and with the caretaker. If you are new to the building take notes so you can talk to the staff and caretaker about questions or concerns you may have. If you are returning to your building, note repairs and maintenance done over the summer. Make note of jobs still to be done.

Go through the office. Ensure you have the documents that comprise the business of education:

- The Education Act, 1995
- School Division Policy Manual
- School Policy Manual and or Student Handbook
- Curriculum Guides
- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Saskatchewan Learning documents
- LINC agreement
- Support Staff agreement (CUPE or other)
- STF Collective Bargaining agreement

Develop **a yearly plan**. Using the school division calendar, establish the following:

- Report card dates (if you have three reporting periods it will be approximately every 65 days, every 48 days if you have four reporting periods)
- Parent-teacher conferences

- Professional development opportunities
- Institute and convention days
- Other: Winter/Christmas concert, parties, picture day, grad, track and field, environmental trips, etc. Put as much as you can into the yearly schedule at the beginning of the year. People like to know what is coming up.
- Administrative Group meetings (principal's meetings), staff meetings, classroom visits (if formal), hallway/playground supervision, local board, School/Parent Advisory Council meetings, School Division Board meetings, etc.

Talk to your **Director**. Find out about the expectations of Central Office. Things to consider:

- Committees you may be asked to sit on
- Professional development opportunities for administrators
- Budget, ordering
- Supervision – how you will be evaluated
- Supervision of staff – your role as principal
- Shared services – what and who is available
- Standardized testing - CAT, CTBS. What grades are involved, what is the schedule, where are the resources/books
- Goals of the School Division Board

Develop agenda for **first staff meeting**.

Become familiar with names and faces of members of the **extended educational community** – RCMP officers, Band councils, social workers, mental health workers, public health nurse, addictions workers, community wellness coordinator, STF executive assistants, bus drivers.

Welcome **interns** to school. Provide orientation to the plant and staff, ensure they have school/student handbook, copier codes, keys. Book subs for supervising teachers for when they go to internship workshops.

Plan opening **professional development**. Aim for balance between inspirational and practical.

"Our principal planned a PD session at a retreat setting. We stayed overnight on Thursday and had a PD session on Friday."

Best Practice On Track

Fall

Personal Professional Goals

Personal Professional Goal Setting

Consider this an ongoing, yearly process. The following people should submit personal goals at the beginning of each school year: students, teachers, administration. You may request goals from the school secretary, caretaker, librarian, teacher assistants and other support staff. Check your school division policy manual – it may tell you who has to submit goals. Schedule 15-20 minutes with each person to discuss his or her goals. Review the year-end goals in May/June.

Administrative Tasks

There are a huge number of administrative tasks to be accomplished in the first six weeks of school. This list is long but first check with your school division and director. They may have a similar list tailored to the needs of your school division. *Also consider that this is a generic list – not every administrative task needs to be done by every administrator.* See your director, assistant directors, vice/assistant principals, secretary treasurer and school secretary for the forms that are used in your school division. Make sure you know the deadlines for your school division.

Newsletters

- *Ensure* classrooms have appropriate number of desks, chairs, tables and they are of a suitable size.
- *Prepare* opening newsletter.
- *Prepare* staff telephone number list.
- *Prepare* new school staff list. Indicate teaching assignments, homeroom, committee work, etc.
- *Prepare* class lists. Post on doors for opening day. Distribute to division office, Speech Language Pathologist, principal, vice-principal, department heads, Public Health Nurse, etc.
- *Send* a copy of school year calendar to bus drivers, driver education instructor.
- *Timetables:* get and distribute timetables from resource room teacher, librarian, computer classroom, music room, art room, guidance teacher.
- *Plan* professional development for administrative team – consider Saskatchewan Council of Educational Administrators (September), Saskatchewan School-Based Administrators (May), Joint Conference (early May), Canadian Association of Principals (April).
- *Request* cumulative records for new students, and forward cumulative records as per requested.
- *New* Student Registration.
- *Plan* Education Week.

Paperwork

Many principals work hard at the beginning of the school year to have everything ready for a smooth start to the school year. The first staff meeting of the year is important in giving staff the resources they need to get going. Consider having the following ready for staff at the first staff meeting.

Consider:
providing each staff member with a binder, file folder, or box for each teacher for all of this information.
Attendance slips
Registration forms – blank for new students
Purchase order forms
Blank timetables
Teacher timetables – blue cards (for director)
Educator Profiles
Insurance beneficiary cards
TD 1 forms
Leave request forms
Salary Deduction authorizations
Textbook inventories
Accident report forms
Field trip request forms
Class lists
Students who have outstanding books, fees
Report cards and envelopes
Schedules for art room, computer room, music room, library, resource room
Teacher evaluation schedule and forms
Extra-curricular activity list
Committee lists
Teacher growth plans, PD plans, personal professional goals

- Student forms:
  Secondary registration forms (bubble forms)
  Correspondence school course applications
  Personal timetables for each student in Secondary school
  Student accident insurance applications
  Forms required by Sask Health – Public Health Nurse
  Forms required by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Teacher Supervision

- *Talk* to your director about what is expected/required. There may be division policy and forms already in place that you will use.

- *Meet* with teachers that are scheduled to be part of a formal supervision cycle. Discuss what is required, establish a schedule for professional growth dialogue, set up times when you can visit the classroom.

- *Meet* with teachers who are not part of a formal cycle and establish how you can support them in the classroom.

Winter

Long-Range Planning

School divisions and schools often engage in a long-range planning process to meet the needs of programming, staffing, facility maintenance, budgeting and ordering, and planning for extra-curricular programs. Planning Committees may involve the following in the planning process:

- Students, SRC
- Local Board, School/Parent Advisory Council
- Division Board Trustee
- Teachers, Department Heads, Committee Chairs
- Administration
- School support staff

Attend administrative staff/Board **retreats** for dialogue opportunities.

Attend **conferences and congresses** to network with colleagues.

Review **Personal Professional Growth Plans** with teachers. There is still lots of time to work on plans and find conferences and other professional development activities.

Best Practice On Track

"Give up prep time to free teachers for breaks/preps on a regular basis or an impromptu basis – adds element of surprise, out-of-the-box thinking."

Review and revisit **Mission and Vision** statements. Do they reflect where we are now?

Spring

Considering the busy and unpredictable nature of spring, provide support in the form of guidance, professional and personal.

Prepare the staff transfers, resignations and retirements. Establish procedures for farewells and gifts.

***Review* School Goals.**

- discuss "hits" and "misses"
- establish where to go from here
- have goals been met?
- will some goals be carried forward?
- further action needed
- establish plans for further goal setting – evaluate how it worked this year
- are there things to do differently in the next school year?

***Discuss* Year in Review.**

- what worked and what didn't. Have a go-around at the last staff meeting to discuss the year. This will help for future plans and goal setting.
- "snowball activity" – everyone writes one thing they didn't like about the year, or something they want to forget. Write it on a piece of white paper, roll it into a ball and on the count of three have a snowball fight. At the end (when everyone has had a chance to throw around lots of snowballs) throw them all into the garbage. This is a great way to "let go" of a bad experience, unfortunate incident, or just something you want to forget about.

End the year on a positive note – talk to all the staff about their plans for summer holidays, plan a year end party, invite staff to your house for a social.

Celebrate the school year – yearbook, top ten list.

Best Practice On Track

"Our principal was always asking, "How was your day? How did that go?" And really wanting to know. Our principal listened and offered suggestions when needed."

Celebrate the staff – be sure to recognize those who are retiring, transferring, moving.

Complete final review of Personal Professional Development or Growth Plans. Set aside 15-20 minutes for each teacher to talk about what they did during the year, what worked and what didn't, and what plans they are considering or hopes they have for next year.

Developing Vision & Direction: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Begins

- ✓ "stump" speech
- ✓ set up your office
- ✓ tour the school
- ✓ develop a calendar for the year
- ✓ update substitute list
- ✓ plan opening social
- ✓ meet and greet:
  - the vice principal
  - all staff
  - interns
  - volunteers
  - local board members
  - school division staff
  - the Director and Assistant
- ✓ plan first staff meeting
- ✓ welcome newsletter

Fall

- ✓ staff goals
- ✓ ensure adequate resources
- ✓ general lists:
  - classes
  - staff assignments
- ✓ send calendar to:
  - central office
  - local school board
  - bus drivers
  - parents
  - community
- ✓ finalize and distribute timetables
- ✓ plan admin P.D.
- ✓ plan Education Week
- ✓ review forms
  - classroom
  - office
  - division
  - provincial

Winter

- ✓ begin long-range planning document and processes
- ✓ review personal and professional growth plans with staff
- ✓ revisit mission & vision statements

Spring

- ✓ prepare staff transfers, resignations, and retirements
- ✓ review school goals
- ✓ review the school year
- ✓ celebrate
- ✓ review professional growth plans with staff

Resources

Barth, R.S. (2001). *Learning By Heart*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Block, P. (1987). *The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills At Work*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Boyczuk, C. (2002). Administrative Calendar 2002. Presented at The Principal's Short Course, Saskatoon, SK. July 2-5, 2002.

Dufour, R. (1991). *The Principal As Staff Developer*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.

Deal, T.E., Peterson, K.D. (1994). *The Leadership Paradox: Balancing Logic and Artistry In Schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Garmston, R.S., Wellman, B. (1999). *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook For Developing Collaborative Groups*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.

The Globe and Mail. (July 31, 2002).

Kent, J. (1992). *Effective Organizations: A Consultant's Resource*. Ottawa, ON: Skills Program For Management Volunteers.

Saskatchewan School-Based Administrator's Professional Development Program Modules One to Six. (1993). Saskatoon, SK: Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. (1997). *Leading The Learning Community*. Regina, SK: Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

Senge, P.M. (1990). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Senge, P.M., Cambron-McCabe, et.al. (2000). *Schools That Learn: A Fifth Discipline Fieldbook for Educators, Parents, and Everyone Who Cares About Education*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

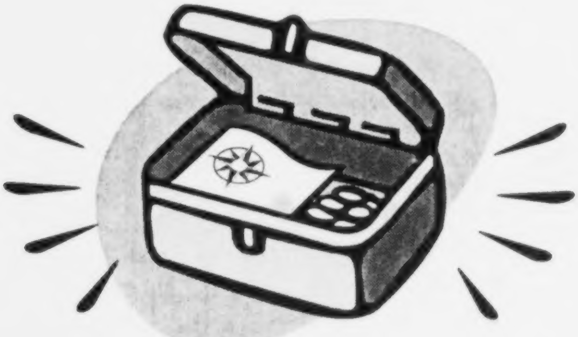
Senge, P.M., Ross, et.al. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday.

Stephanson, S. (1994). *School Based Planning: Talking And Growing Together*. Brampton, ON: School Success Consulting.

Developing Vision and Direction

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Developing Vision and Direction
2. The Importance of Shared Values
3. Effective School Goals
4. Values & Goals Worksheet
5. Communications Audit
6. Creating A Vision – What If?
7. Mission, Symbols & Artifacts
8. Getting to Know Each Other
9. Staff Meetings: Making Meetings Matter
10. Long-Term Planning
    - school
    - local board
11. Reflective Questions

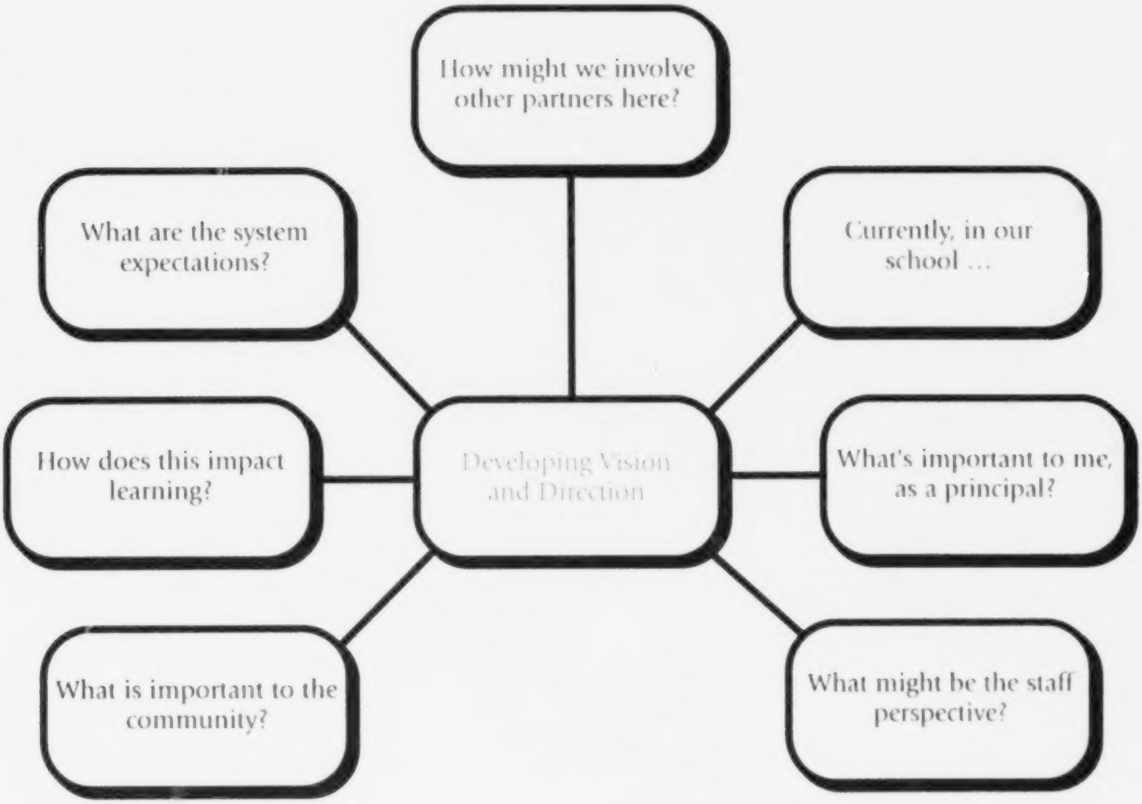


Flexibility: Developing Vision and Direction

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Developing Vision and Direction.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school …
How does this impact learning?
Developing Vision and Direction
What's important to me, as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Developing Vision and Direction

The Importance of Shared Values

With the democratization of organizations, especially schools, the leadership function becomes one of creating a "community of shared values."

Lezotte, 1997

Clarifying the values system and breathing life into it are the greatest contributions a leader can make.

Peters and Waterman, 1992

Leaders of the best performing organizations defined their jobs in terms of identifying and constantly communicating commonly held values.

Heskett and Schlesinger, 1996

Values describe how we intend to operate on a day-to-day basis as we pursue our vision.

Senge and others, 1994

A clear and focused sense of values was the critical common factor among the successful principals we studied.

Deal and Peterson, 1990

In the context of organizational development the values question represents the essential "ABC's" of school improvement because it challenges the people within the organization to identify the specific attitudes, behaviors, and commitments they must demonstrate in order to advance toward their vision.

DuFour and Eaker, 1998

Effective School Goals

> We have what is perhaps the most striking, contradictory, self-defeating characteristic of schooling and our efforts to improve it: the gap between the need—and intent—to improve academic performance in our schools on the one hand, and the conspicuous and virtual absence of clear, concrete academic goals in most school or district planning efforts on the other. Without explicit learning goals, we are simply not set up and organized for improvement or results. Only such goals will allow us to analyze, monitor, and adjust practice toward improvement.
>
> *Schmoker 1996, p. 18*

Effective school goals are

- Clearly linked to the vision
- Limited in number to ensure focus
- Focused on the desired outcome rather than the means to achieve the outcome
- Translated into clear, measurable performance standards that specify the criteria to be used in evaluating progress
- Monitored continuously
- Designed to produce some short-term wins
- Understood and accepted as significant by all parties

Values and Goals Worksheet

Think about the school you would like to create and the kind of principal you must be to make that thought become reality. What attitudes, behaviors, and commitments must you demonstrate to move your school in the right direction? What specific goals could you adopt for yourself and/or your school that could serve as a benchmark for your efforts?

Take a few minutes to write your own value statements and goals.

Value Statements	Goals

Adapted from *The Principal Series*, 1998, ASCD.

Communications Audit

One of the best tools available to principals in communicating priorities is attention. What principals pay attention to conveys what is important and valued in the school. Consider the following questions in assessing the clarity of your communication.

What do I plan for? The preparation and public presentation of a plan to achieve specific objectives signals that those objectives are priorities.

What do I monitor? In most organizations, what gets monitored gets done.

What do I model? People communicate most eloquently through their actions, not their words.

What questions do I ask? Schools that are in the habit of asking tough questions that focus on the achievement of their students are most likely to see significant gains (Wasley, Hampel, and Clark 1995).

How do I allocate my time? The allocation of time is one of the truest tests of what is important to an individual and an organization.

What do I celebrate through ceremonies and rituals? Celebration of evidence of commitment to mission, vision, values, and goals reinforces their importance.

What am I willing to confront? Unwillingness to address behavior that is contrary to mission, vision, values, and goals undermines the credibility of the principal.

Am I consistent and persistent in communicating priorities? Nothing is more important to sustaining an improvement effort than a consistent, persistent focus of the principal.

Creating a Vision – What if?....

. . . Rather Than Hopes, Dreams, and a Clear Vision, the Culture Supports a Sense of Hopelessness, Discouragement, and Despair

Suggested action: Articulate a clear, compelling, and positive vision for the school. Make the vision a reality by developing plans, taking action, and modeling its importance. Reinforce that vision by communicating it in stories, words, and "walking the talk."

Activities: Hold positive, well-designed ceremonies to recognize positive accomplishments related to the school's vision.

Ask reflective questions:

Is there a clear, compelling, and positive vision for the school that is regularly articulated?

Are there plans and actions that are moving the school forward?

How can staff and administration reinforce and communicate the vision to everyone?

Strategies for Overcoming Negativism:

- Confront the negativity head-on; give people a chance to vent.
- Support positive cultural elements and staff members.
- Focus energy on the recruitment, selection, and retention of effective, positive staff members.
- Consciously and directly focus on eradicating the negative and rebuilding around positive norms and beliefs.
- Develop new stories of success, renewal and accomplishment.
- End old or dead ceremonies, and revive dying, decrepit ones.
- Celebrate the positive and the possible.

Artifacts in the School: Symbols and Signs With Meaning

Adapted from Peterson & Deal
The Shaping School Cultures Fieldbook (2002)

Every school has a wide spectrum of artifacts located in classrooms, hallways, and meeting places. Artifacts exist as symbols and signs of school values. Classrooms store symbols of work and learning. Hallways display a mix of student and teacher accomplishments, awards, messages, and mottoes. Meeting places often herald spirit and community in murals and mascots. For example, in Lakeridge School in Saskatoon, the enlarged mission statement is displayed in the front hall where everyone walking in can see it. In some schools, the core values of the school are on pins that staff members and students receive for special accomplishments.

S.O.A.R. to Success

- Success
- Organization
- Attitude
- Responsibility

Lakeridge Elementary School

Artifacts that recognize the accomplishments of staff, students, and community members motivate effort, focus attention on core values, and shout out that the school has done good, if not great, things.

Leaders need to help find, display, and organize the artifacts of the school into symbols and signs of purpose and value.

Assessing the Meaning of Artifacts, Symbols, and Signs

Take some time to reflect on the artifacts, symbols and signs in your school. Assess their meaning to staff, students, and community.

✓ Examine the Mission Statement

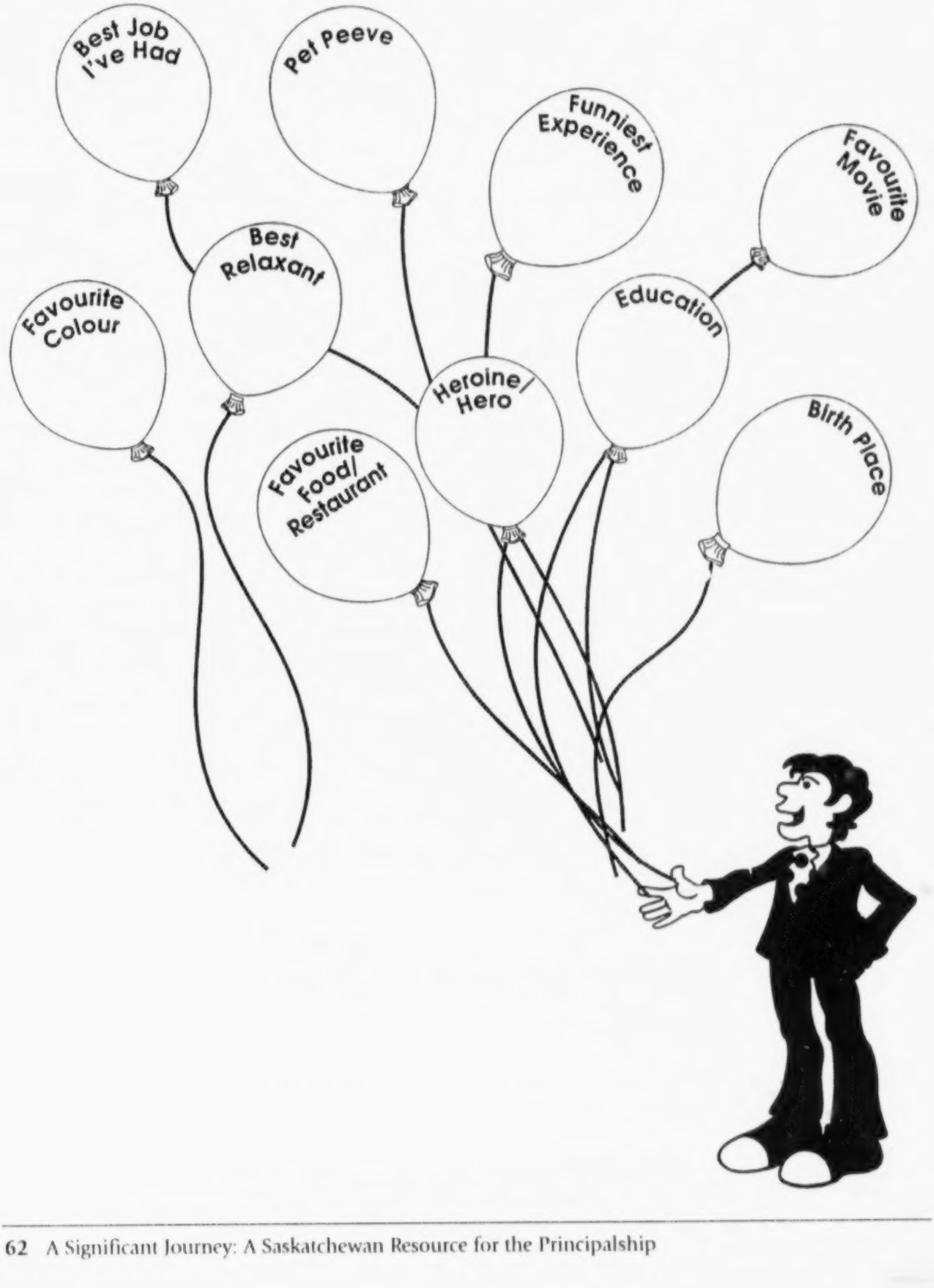
Following are some questions to ask concerning your school's mission statement:

Citizenship

- *Is the school mission statement prominently and engagingly displayed?*
- *Is it regularly refined and continually mentioned by leaders and staff members?*
- *Is the mission statement exhibited in the central meeting place of the school either in whole or as a motto or slogan?*

Getting to Know Each Other

An exciting activity for that first staff meeting!



Best Job I've Had
Pet Peeve
Funniest Experience
Favourite Movie
Best Relaxant
Favourite Colour
Education
Heroine/ Hero
Birth Place
Favourite Food/ Restaurant

Staff Meetings – Making Meetings Matter

Meetings have become a way of life and the preferred method of conducting educational work. The issues facing public education make it clear that we will most likely have more meetings in the future rather than fewer. This means we must hone our skills to make every meeting as productive as possible. A good meeting can give positive direction to or help resolve any issue or problem. Good meetings take planning and a lot of it.

- Remember … public relations hold groups together, and feeling good about the meeting itself is important to its success.
- Don't plan a meeting unless there is a clear need for one.
- Make sure everyone knows why the meeting is necessary and why their input is important.
- Be aware of how to manage people who want to push personal agendas.
- Make sure that all handouts and visual aids are correct and error-free. If the meeting will include community members, handouts and visuals must be free of jargon and unnecessary technical language.
- Plan to have a portable PA system if the meeting will be for a large group.
- Plan on a blackboard/whiteboard, overhead project and screen, or chart paper if the meeting includes many people. Having someone write motions that everyone can see and read keeps things efficient.
- Remember … meetings run best when the chair uses techniques in promoting positive group dynamics that effective teachers use regularly in the classroom.
- Have a method of welcoming and informing latecomers to the meeting. This will ensure that they come up to speed without slowing the meeting.
- A record of the meeting is important. Written minutes are the most efficient.

Planning and Conducting Meetings

- Start and end on time.
- Involve everyone who needs to be at the meeting.
- Give as much notice as possible – try to have a yearly calendar established.
- Publish an agenda that participants have had an opportunity to contribute items to the list.
- If there are controversial items, don't try to stack the deck but do try to present information on all sides.
- Everyone needs to know the ground rules for how the meeting will be conducted and decisions made.
- Time limits will need to be set to cover all items on the agenda. The meeting will need to move efficiently and briskly.
- Let people speak but they need to stay on task and topic. Avoid war stories and gossip.
- Don't allow criticism of the speaker or the input.
- Use humor appropriately.
- Summarize often to ensure everyone understands the point being made and agrees. Make a special effort to summarize the accomplishments of the meeting.
- Remember that if information is to be distributed after a meeting, identify what information will be distributed, who will distribute it, when they will distribute it, and who will receive it.
- Thank participants.
- Announce the date, time and place of the next meeting.
- Remember that the group ultimately determines the outcome of any meeting.
- Individuals chairing meetings need to know how to chair a meting effectively and what pitfalls to avoid.

- Refreshments seem to make any meeting more pleasant.

- The business of meetings may consist of information sharing, making motions for action to be taken, or tabling and referring items. Each of these procedures needs to be treated differently.

- The chair of the meeting should have a variety of methods to encourage participation in discussions.

- Leadership and chairing skills can always be added to and improved.

Reprinted with permission from *A Reference Guide for School Administrators*, Alberta Teachers Association.

Long Range School-Based Planning

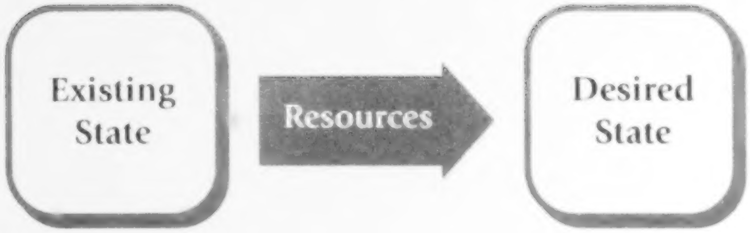
The Process

School-based planning goes beyond a mechanistic series of procedures. Its power is in its capacity to create dissonance in people, upset old views, identify new possibilities and pose new questions. In essence, what is created is a learning organization that is characterized by focus, collaboration, open communication, examination of assumptions, sharing of world views, and continued evaluation of policies and programs.

"In a learning organization, leaders are designers, stewards (of vision) and teachers. They are responsible for building an organization where people continually expand their capabilities to understand complexity, clarify vision, and improve shared mental models - that is, they are responsible for learning." Peter Senge (Pg. 340)

This school-based planning process will employ collaborative decision-making strategies to explore a desired state or future for your school and community (visioning), to examine where the 'school' is now (strengths, concerns, opportunities, and challenges), and develop action plans to bridge the gap between the present and the future.

A vision scenario is the story of hopes and dreams for the future. It will vividly describe what we would like our lives and school to look like, feel like and sound like. It involves projecting ourselves over the horizon of time to greater things which lie ahead. It is an ideal and unique image of the future. When we put our dreams into action, the results are powerful. If we begin a school-based planning process with the end in mind, we are more likely to be successful. Actions without the context of a strong vision could turn out to be truly ineffective in the long run.



To enhance our understanding of the existing/current state of the school …

What are the strengths of the school?

What do we have (i.e. programs, practices, characteristics) in our school that is exemplary?

What are some of the things that we like about our school?

What are the things that, even if everything else changed, we would want to keep?

What are we proud of?

To assist us in our exploration of our potential and our future …

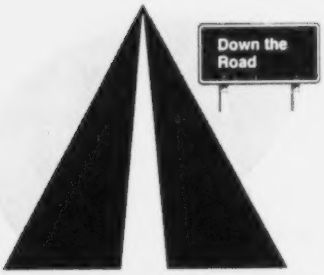
What potential does our school have to further develop exemplary programs, practices, etc.?

What could we be doing better?

What are some of the things that we're not so proud of in our school?

If things could be changed, what should we do first?

In what ways could we improve?



As we look to the future ...

In five years, when students leave our school, what would we like them to be saying about our school?

What do we want our school to be doing in five years?

What should our school look like, sound like, feel like?

What do we want to be proud of?

Then ...

What needs to happen to move from our current state to our desired state?

What do we need to keep?

What do we need to drop, develop, create?

What are we committed to doing?

Who will do what? When? How?

This is a good example of a mid year review with all of the stakeholders:

Kelvington Local School Board
Strategic Planning Workshop
January 22, 1996

Participants:

Staff
Local board members
Central office staff
Division representatives

Agenda

- Discussion of Change Process
- Reflection and Dialogue
- Developing a Code of Behaviour
- Developing a Written Statement of Purpose
- Values and Vision
- Mission Statement
- Developing Goals
- Taking Steps to Plan Action
- Evaluation

Strategic Planning: Articulating and Sharing Vision

A guide for reflection and dialogue...

Starting with me:

- I believe our school board is
- I believe it wants to be
- I believe we need
- We can help each other by
- The aspect of school board work I most care about is
- My vision of how our school board could be better in relation to aspects I care about is

Starting with us:

- We believe our school board is
- We believe it wants to be
- We believe we need
- We can help each other by
- The aspect of school board work I most care about is
- Our vision of how our school board could be better in relation to aspects we care about is

Strategic Planning: Change

Kelvington Local School Board Workshop
January 22, 1996

A process of defining purpose and vision and setting goals implies a process of change. Implementing change involves several steps:

1) Clarifying the board's purpose and basic values, setting goals and voicing the groups desired future state;
2) Conducting a review of the board and assessing the current state in relation to the desired state;
3) Determining the action necessary to close the gap between the current state and the desired state;
4) Developing plans and strategies for implementing and managing the action needed.

The process we are about to start is a change process. We must:

1) Be clear about the purpose of the change - what is it
2) Determine possible impact on the board and community and schools
3) Determine who will be affected by the change
4) Predict how board members, parents, staff, students will react

Strategic Planning: Code of Behaviour

The process of strategic planning often involves cultural change which means changing the behaviour of people throughout the organization. Culture deals with people - what they think, feel, how they act and what they do with their time.

Developing a code of behaviour helps us to understand how other people in the organization think and feel and defines acceptable norms for individual members of the organization.

After listing our own thoughts on acceptable behaviours for the local school board a small group will develop a code of behaviour which will be circulated.

Throughout the process it is important to:

Involve everyone.

Think of both the individual and the organization. Working with the big picture of the organization and the changes in each person builds interdependence and collective momentum.

Think of win-win situations in which both the individual and the organization win.

Ensure the desired behaviours are modelled and that appropriate behaviours are rewarded.

Strategic Planning: Developing a Code of Behaviour

How would you like people to describe the local board?

How does your description differ from what exists right now?

What kind of change would help us to achieve these improvements?

What will look and sound different?

How will people behave differently?

Desired, acceptable, and unacceptable behaviours

Sense of Purpose

A stated purpose helps us focus our energies, make productive use of our resources, and ensures that we give attention to the expectations of clients (Strategic Planning in Education, 1992).

The purpose or mandate of an organization is a response to the following:

Why does our organization exist?

What is our focus?

What is our legislated mandate?

What is it that we are organized to perform?

What is the essence of our functions?

Values and Visions

Change is easier to accomplish if it is tied to the development of values and visions. A clear statement of values and a vision helps people to identify what the organization will look like after the change process. People will understand where they fit in and how they should act.

These are not the only reasons why an organization should develop values and vision. Research indicates that most successful organizations have a core set of values which guides the actions and decisions of the organization. Successful organizations also have a clear picture of their preferred future.

Most organizations have values but they are rarely articulated or recorded. The next step is to develop and record the values of the Kelvington Local School Board. Ideally, the effectiveness of the board will be measured by our progress in living our values and reaching our vision.

Definition of Values

Values are the fundamental principles and beliefs that form the foundation of an organization. These principles guide the organization's behaviour, services, and programs.

Some common values are:

- Respect for people
- High quality education
- Integrity, trust, competence

Values are formed by a process that involves one's feelings, thoughts, desires, actions and spiritual needs.

When members of a board do not share values, the result can be confusion, infighting, personal conflict and – most significantly – an inability to move towards a shared vision of the board's future.

In developing values, ask yourself: "How would I like us to behave as a board?"

Reflective Questions

What are your personal beliefs about supervision/evaluation and professional development?

What should be the philosophy and goals of the system?

How would these goals best be met?

How would these goals best be communicated?

What supports/resources are necessary?

Creating a Supportive School Climate

Creating a
Supportive School
Climate

- Introduction 74
- School Culture 77
  - A Cultural Inventory 78
  - Collaborative Culture 81
  - Maintaining School Culture 81
- Shared Decision Making 83
  - Ethical Decision Making 83
  - Principles for Ethical Decision Making 84
  - Reflections for Ethical Decision Making 84
- Activities For Your School 85
  - Before School Opens 85
  - Fall 86
  - Fall and Winter 90
  - Spring 91
  - Creating a Supportive School Climate: School Activities At A Glance 94
- Resources 95
- Travel Kit 96

Creating a Supportive School Climate

Introduction

***The Education Act* (1995) Section 175(1) says the principal shall:**

- exercise general supervision over the well-being and good order of pupils while the pupils are at school or participating in school activities;
- define and prescribe the standards of the school with respect to the duties of pupils and give direction to members of the staff and to pupils that may be necessary to maintain the good order, harmony and efficiency of the school;
- administer or cause to be administered any disciplinary measures that are considered proper by him or her and that are consistent with this Act;

The Role of the Principal

Attention to the details that create a supportive school climate is a dimension of the principal's role essential to the promotion of effective learning.

Some of these roles include:
- a child-centered school focus
- support for diversity and commitment to equity
- a safe, nurturing environment
- attention to supervision and care
- healthy, pleasant surroundings supporting learning
- celebrations
- collaboration
- openness and communication, and
- visible and accessible to teachers and administrators.

School Division Policy

As you prepare to consider developing a supportive school climate, consider how your school division policy deals with the subject. Record any ideas in the box provided.

Policies and Practices from my School Division

-
-
-
-

School^{PLUS}

?
Information Here

The Role of the School: Final Report (2001) recommended the implementation of a community school philosophy for all schools.

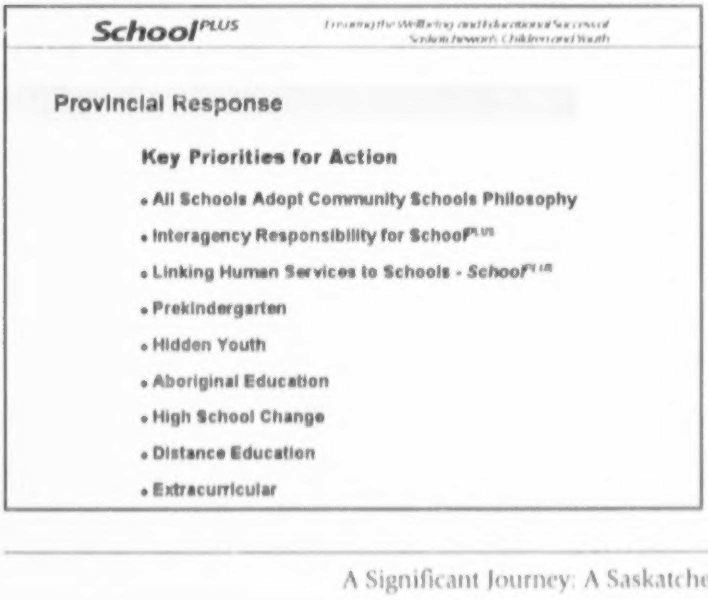
Specifically, the recommendation reads:

That all of the educational stakeholder organizations do everything within their power to promote an approach to leadership and school administration that is consistent with a Community School philosophy that,

- Seeks to be collaborative, rather than adversarial;
- Seeks to promote the development of staff, rather than merely exercising control,
- Seeks to share power and value team work;
- Possesses negotiating and mediation skills;
- Values morale and organizational climate;
- Finds ways to meaningfully consult student opinion, and attempts to adapt the school program in light of this input;
- Values parents as partners in the education of children;
- Sees the community as a resource, and seeks ways to incorporate these resources in the life of the school.

Final Report: Task Force on the Role of the School, 2001

In its response to the Task Force report, Saskatchewan Learning invites us to see the "Securing Saskatchewan's Future: Ensuring the Wellbeing and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth." (2002)

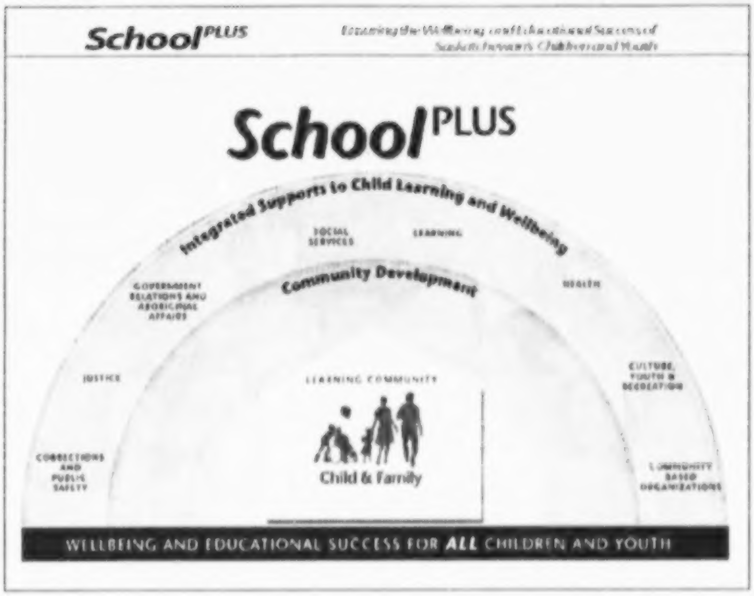


School^{PLUS}

Provincial Response

Key Priorities for Action

- All Schools Adopt Community Schools Philosophy
- Interagency Responsibility for School^{PLUS}
- Linking Human Services to Schools - School^{PLUS}
- Prekindergarten
- Hidden Youth
- Aboriginal Education
- High School Change
- Distance Education
- Extracurricular


SchoolPLUS
Ensuring the Wellbeing and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth
SchoolPLUS
Integrated Supports to Child Learning and Wellbeing
SOCIAL SERVICES
LEARNING
HEALTH
GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND ABORIGINAL AFFAIRS
Community Development
JUSTICE
LEARNING COMMUNITY
CULTURE, YOUTH & RECREATION
CORRECTIONS AND PUBLIC SAFETY
Child & Family
COMMUNITY BASED ORGANIZATIONS
WELLBEING AND EDUCATIONAL SUCCESS FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

In Saskatchewan a key element of Adaptive Leadership is: Building Bridges and Networks.

- Building bridges and networks with students, and families strengthen teaching and learning.
- Building bridges to community agencies, government, business and professional organizations expands the knowledge and resources available to the school and increases its capacity for teaching and learning.
- Effective leaders promote activities that engage staff in teaming activities to enhance collaborative planning, peer coaching, and mentoring. These activities strengthen the collaborative culture in a school.
- Leaders play an important role in encouraging staff to develop networks and to work collaboratively with the community and other agencies.

Sask. Learning, 2003

While the title of this dimension speaks of school climate, the term "culture" is more encompassing and includes the values and ethical principles that guide the life of a school. The remainder of this section addresses the principal's role in establishing a positive school culture.

School Culture

Culture or climate is defined as

"underground streams of norms, values, beliefs, traditions, and rituals that has built up over time as people work together, solve problems, and confront challenges".

Deal and Peterson (1998)

F.A.Q. **"What is school climate, school spirit? Who is involved in establishing a climate?"**

School culture is one of those subtle yet influential factors in all schools. School culture includes the rituals and customs of your school, how people spend their time, who and what they consider important, and the values brought to the school by students, families, the community and staff.

?
Information Here

Schools with strong positive cultures are places where:

- Staffs have a shared sense of purpose and pour their hearts into their work.
- The underlying norms are of collegiality, improvement and hard work.
- Rituals celebrate student accomplishment, teacher innovation and parent commitment.
- There exist informal networks of storytellers, heroes, and heroines who provide a web of information, support and history.
- Success, joy and humour are abundant.

Deal and Peterson (1998)

Behavioral Norms of Strong School Cultures:

The following are some behavioral norms which help us to clarify our understanding of school culture.

- Collaboration
- Innovation
- Appreciation and Recognition
- Caring, Celebration and Humour
- Traditions and Rituals
- Expectations
- Guarding What Is Important
- Concrete Support
- Professional Respect
- Decision Making
- Communication
- Initiative

Stephanson (1994)

Resources to Remember

Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit School Review Material (phone 306.966.7634; fax 306.966.7619)

What's Worth Fighting For? Working Together for Your School. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991)

Creating Community from Within: A Staff Development Process. SPDU (2003).

Module One:
Working with People.
SSBA.

A Cultural Inventory

As principal you may wish to use an instrument to help reveal the current culture of your school. A number of these instruments already exist in the literature and can be accessed through the Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit (SPDU).

The following reflections may be helpful when considering the use of a survey or questionnaire:

- Consider carefully your reasons for using an instrument.

- What other ways are available to find out what people think about the school? ie. discussion groups, informal discussions, Local School Board, School /Parent Advisory Council.

- Consider carefully the audience. Do you wish to use the instrument as a starting point for discussion with staff and/or students or perhaps with a parent group and other applicable educational partners? Do you wish to find out what students, staff, and publics think about the school? Are there other groups who could be asked for information ie. Seniors, Chamber of Commerce?

- What is the intent? Do you want to use the instrument to precipitate change, growth, improvement?
- What will you do with the findings?
- How will you let people know what you have found out about the culture and climate of your school?
- Will the findings lead to plans for action and improvement?
- What processes will you put into place if you like/don't like the results?

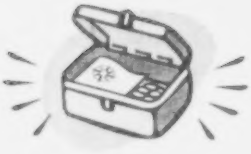
Emerging Research on Trust In Schools!

In the March 2003 issue of *Educational Leadership*, A. Bryk and B. Schneider report on their recent research which shows that relational trust among teachers, parents, and school leaders improves much of the routine work of schools and is a key resource for reform. In their longitudinal analysis of successfully restructuring schools, the authors concluded that

> *Finally, these trust relations culminate in important consequences at the organizational level, including more effective decision making, enhanced social support for innovation, more efficient social control of adults' work, and an expanded moral authority to "go the extra mile" for children. Relational trust, so conceived, is appropriately viewed as an organizational property in that its constitutive elements are socially defined in the reciprocal exchanges among participants in a school community, and its presence (or absence) has important consequences for the functioning of the school and its capacity to engage fundamental change (p.22).* (Kruse, Louis, & Bryk, 2003).

Consider that when used in an open, honest and trusting environment, an instrument or survey can be a catalyst for growth and progress toward an enhanced learning environment.

"A number of Saskatchewan school-based administrators believe passionately that relationships are at the very foundation of what they do in education. Working at developing and maintaining those relationships with all educational partners in their community is a priority for them. Building trust is the first step."



Set an Example

- Be reliable and conscientious in fulfilling obligations.
- Keep promises.
- Act out of principles and with consistency.
- Keep confidences, be honest, and sustain integrity.
- Preserve the dignity of individuals.
- Recognize uniqueness of each person.

Leading the Learning Community, SSTA, Module 4.

Reflection

"What do I do to demonstrate that I am trustworthy?"

Collaborative Culture

The complex, unpredictable world of today's schools require more than just a "super-principal" in order to do the job that society expects of it. Working collaboratively helps to divide the labour and takes best advantage of the talents and expertise of many. As in many things worthwhile, it takes time.

"You don't have all the answers. There are many experts on staff who can assist."

There are some underlying assumptions that go along with developing a collaborative culture:

- It's beneficial
- It's sharing power
- It has many forms
- It means finding time
- It means getting along
- It requires a trusting climate
- It's a process not an event

Stephanson (1994)

Maintaining School Culture

Living the Mission Statement

Once the culture of the school has been identified and the principal, staff and other stakeholders have worked to shape the desired culture, comes the task of keeping that culture alive and vibrant. Living the mission statement every day is one way to ensure the culture is maintained.

"Everything we do at the school has to be balanced against what the mission statement says and every decision that we make has to coincide with what we believe about our school."

Celebrations

Celebrations

Celebrations, maintaining positive responses, and smiling and laughing contribute to the ongoing healthy life of the school.

"I celebrate birthdays with every student in the school. You see it's my fun. I can be in the middle of a difficult situation ... just getting off the phone and the secretary, Mrs. J, will say, "Do you have time for a birthday celebration?" And of course I always have time...Even the 14-year-olds come in. I know it's a small thing but in our school I know it's important to students."

Smile And Laugh More

Don't take yourself too seriously. You'll show self-confidence and be able to motivate others.

"Keep an open mind, pray and have an awesome sense of humour. Laughing at yourself when you begin to wonder what you were doing five minutes before helps ease the stress of multi-tasking."

Encourage Respectful Conversation

Help the staff understand the difference between dialogue and discussion and when to use each. Openly promote and invite dialogue on equity issues. These kinds of conversations increase awareness and ultimately understanding.

Pay Attention To Relationships

"You know at the end of the day it's pretty simplistic. There are nuts and bolts things that you have to do, that are not difficult to do. I think all have a capability to learn those things, but if you don't have an ability to relate to people or to build and foster relationships with people, you're not going to get anywhere."

Shared Decision Making

One of the assumptions involved in creating a collaborative culture is sharing power. Using the collective wisdom of the entire school team in collaborative decision making is encouraged whenever suitable. It is also important to realize that in the busy life of the school there may not be enough time to reach consensus on all issues. Principals make a lot of decisions in the course of the school year. Not all have to be made by consensus; however, it is important to consult those people most likely to be affected by the decision. Some examples of shared decision making include working with students and local board members to establish school rules and consequences, turning over the responsibility for setting noon-hour lunch procedures to the supervisors in charge, and giving the task of planning graduation to parents and students. Keep in mind the following during the decision-making process:

- *The Education Act*, 1995
- School Division Policy
- The bottom line
- Who will be held responsible for the decision?

Ethical Decision Making

It is important to consider the ethical processes that underpin decisions. Making ethical decisions is the process of evaluating and choosing among alternatives in a way that is consistent with ethical principles as opposed to just following the rules.

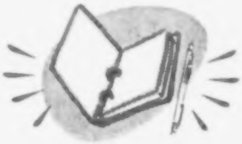
In order to make ethical decisions the following must be in place:

- Ethical commitment – a strong desire to do the right thing
- Ethical consciousness – principles that go far beyond the legal requirements
- Ethical competency – an ability to reason, problem solve, and think things through.

Josephson (1995)

Reflections for the Principal in The Decision-Making Process

- Which methods of decision making am I using now?
- Which have proven to be most useful?
- Are there other methods that might be more useful for the unique situations that arise?



Some Sample Decision-Making Strategies

- PMI – Studying the Pluses, Minuses and Interesting aspects of a situation before reaching a decision.
- Six Thinking Hats – assigning a different point of view to participants to ensure that all aspects are considered (Edward de Bono).
- Pro – Con
- 1-2-4 or Pyramid Process Method. Individuals list their own opinions, then pairs agree, followed by pairs of pairs until a consensus is reached.
- ____________________
  ____
  ____
  ____
  ____

Principles for Ethical Decision Making

1. Ends-based thinking
   - "do whatever provides the greatest good for the greatest number"
2. Rules-based thinking
   - "if everyone in the world were to do what I am about to do, to follow the rule I am about to follow, is that the kind of world I would want to live in?"
3. Care-based thinking
   - "do unto others what you would want others to do to you"

Kidder (1998-1999)

Reflections for Ethical Decision Making

What are the relevant issues and/or dilemmas?
- What needs to be decided?
- Who will be affected by the decision and action?
- What ethical principles and values need consideration?
- What standards are affected (ie. STF Code of Ethics and section 38 of the Teacher's Federation Act).

1. What are my own beliefs, values, assumptions and biases around this issue?
   - What are the facts?
2. What are some alternative courses of action?
   - What are the ethical benefits and risks for each alternative?
   - What do my colleagues say about this issue?
3. What is the best course of action for me to take?
   - How might I implement my plan?
4. What process will I use to evaluate the plan and adjust it in light of new information?

"Make a decision and always review and evaluate. Learn from your mistakes. This is a model of risk taking you want your staff to do and students as well."

Activities For Your School

Before School Opens

The work of teachers and students is enhanced when they are not distracted by needs unrelated to teaching and learning. Consider the following actions prior to school opening which can allow teachers and students to return to school and their work in the classroom.

School Environment

Effective Schools literature credits a clean attractive school as being an important factor in creating a positive, child-focused climate. Walk through the school and view the facility as though you were one of the students.

Consider:

- Are there safety issues? Look at the playground, stairs, floors, lighting panels, etc.
- Is the building clean? Would you want to live there?
- Is the building attractive? Are the colours, bulletin boards, school mascots, flags, grounds, conducive to a pleasant, healthy learning environment?

Talk to staff, local board/School/Parent Advisory Council, Division Board members about facility concerns/ideas you have. Some facility issues can be worked on at the school level and some may need to go to the Division Board.

School Policies, Procedures, Handbooks

The school handbook, student handbook and school policy manual reflect the practices and policies of the school. They also reflect the vision, mission and purposes of your organization.

Consider the following when establishing these documents:

- Is the language used supportive of children, their families and the staff entrusted with their care and education?
- Do the policies, practices and procedures agree or conflict with the school's mission and vision statements?
- Do the written statements reflect current practice in the school?
- Have the documents been approved by the staff, Local School Board/School/Parent Advisory Council and Division Board? Any documents requiring Board approval should be submitted to the Director in the spring so that once

approved they can be distributed to students at school opening in the fall

Other

Consult your **director** regarding when facility evaluation takes place.

Meet with **vice-principal, guidance counselor, and special education staff** to discuss programming and school activities.

Fall

Visit each **classroom** on the first day of school. Talk to as many students as possible. Use their names every time you speak to them.

Take Note!

"Treat kids with respect, set a calm tone when inviting them into your office where they've been sent."

Prepare **list of new SRC members**. Meet with SRC members to discuss their goals and vision for the school. Consider a goal setting workshop for the SRC. With some support the student leaders can conduct this workshop themselves.

Hold monthly (some schools do this weekly) **assemblies**. Work with students, staff, local board/School/Parent Advisory Council, and other applicable educational partners to establish agenda.

- Create rituals to develop culture of the school, e.g. start the assembly with school song or chant.
- Invite local board/School/Parent Advisory Council members, community members or groups to make presentations, hand out awards (ie. Legion poster, essay competition), discuss upcoming community events in which the school is invited to participate (ie. Art Show, Trade Show).

Create a schedule for monthly **Fun/Spirit Days**. Work with students, parents, community to come up with ideas. Even the youngest students have great ideas for dress-up days, challenges and participatory activities.

- Use 5-3-1 for each grade or class to come up with one idea for Fun/Spirit Days. Each person in the grade or class lists five things they would like to do. Small groups narrow the list to three things they agree on. The entire class then refines the list to one favourite activity.

- Use the school year calendar, community and world events to help shape the Fun/Spirit Days calendar i.e. School Olympics.

***Plan* Intramurals.**

***Discuss* facility** at monthly staff meetings. Ask staff to keep a running list of things that need attention and repair. Be prepared to put the list together for submission to the director prior to budgeting that usually begins early in the new year.

Discuss with staff and school division the implementation and use of **programs** such as Lions Quest and Second Step. Both are designed to assist students, staff and families with interpersonal skills and are based on the development of positive, respectful school environments. These programs are "canned" programs and must be purchased by the school division.

***Reaffirm* mission and vision statements** and weigh planning and initiatives against those statements. This will help to maintain focus and keep you and the staff on track as to your stated purpose and goals.

Begin preliminary planning for **Grad**. Set dates, review checklists.

Work with staff to achieve **pleasant surroundings**, particularly the hallways and other public areas.

- Take turns decorating bulletin boards in hallways, library, science room, art room and other non-classroom spaces.
- Have a Welcome sign posted prominently. Many schools have only "All Visitors Report To The Office" signs. Consider the message implied by all visuals.
- Feature students art work on the door to the offices, staff room.
- Have a "Principal's Scrap Book" bulletin board where you can display things that are important to you.
- Display certificates, thank you cards or letters of recognition in the halls.
- Consider putting inspirational messages/pictures on the backs of toilet-stall doors.
- Frame and display pictures of the student body and graduating class.
- Install a trophy case and consider carefully which items should be displayed.

Establish list of **extra-curricular activities**. Work with staff to develop an equitable way to divide up list.

Work with staff and Guidance Counselor to establish **Career Day**. Where is it to be held? What plans do you need to make to transport students or to host the event?

Activate **Education Week** Planning Committee. Work with them and provide support. For information regarding the themes and dates, check out the SaskLearning website.

Prepare **emergency** billet lists from student registration forms. Ensure the following have copies:

- Division Office
- Home Room Teacher
- Bus Driver
- School Office
- Principal and Vice-Principal – have an extra copy to take home

Make a list of **cards** for the school year. Write into your yearly calendar or Daytimer. You may want to have a special card designed with the school logo or student art. This list may include:

- Support Staff
- Caretaker
- Teacher Associates
- Community Workers
- Volunteers

Become familiar with **Occupational Health and Safety** requirements. Establish committee. Schedule meetings four times per year (September 1, December 1, March 1, June 1).

Make unit and **yearly plans** a priority. Ensure your classroom is attractively decorated and is welcoming for students. Consider the following:

- Welcome back bulletin board that features students' names and pictures.
- Welcome back letter for students and parents which outlines your goals for the year.
- Yearly plans posted and distributed to students.
- Student expectations posted.
- An exciting lesson planned for the first day.

- First day assignments, stories, art work posted on walls and bulletin boards before the students come back the second day.

Meet with all **staff** at the beginning of the school year. This can be done informally. Make sure you don't miss anyone!

"Our administrator was in the school during breaks and lunch hour to visit with students and staff."

Ensure that the teachers, committee chairs, student groups, Local Board/School/Parent Advisory Council and Division Board member have input to the content of the **school newsletter**. Ensure that your vision and goals for the year/month are in your Principal's Message. This is an excellent place to communicate Open Door Policy and to advertise when you will be in your office and available to meet with people who choose to come through your open door.

See the ***Embedding the School in the Community Travel Kit*** for school newsletter resources.

Plan school **field trips and environmental trips.**

- Consult school division policy and director regarding trips.
- Talk to teachers about trip plans.
- Ensure requests for trips are submitted early – check School Division policy regarding policy, procedures, timelines.

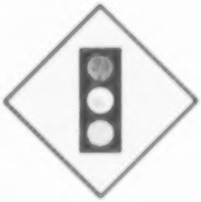
Fall and Winter

Participate in **fundraising events** for charitable causes.

Organizing School Assemblies

Consider:

- Charities and non-profit organizations in your community that could use your help.
- Help can be in the form of "people" help, ie. students providing manpower, or in actual fundraising. Discuss this with your Director and Division Board members to ensure you follow Board policy and guidelines as to what charities you can become involved with and what level of involvement is appropriate.
- Let the community know that you and the school are interested in outreach. Many people feel that it is always the school asking for help. Reaching out into the community to help seniors, daycares, Chamber of Commerce, service groups, can be seen as a positive initiative.



"At assemblies have a class, group of students, or single student present a reading, skit or musical selection."

Prepare list of facility maintenance items for attention. Consider things that need to be repaired, upgraded, added, removed, maintained. Discuss at staff or committee meetings and with the caretaker so that all staff are involved and informed.

During one school year we started a hand-washing campaign. With help from the Public Health Nurse all students and staff were taught when and how to wash their hands. Shortly after that the Kindergarten teacher informed me that her students could not reach the sink, paper towel dispenser or garbage receptacle in the washrooms assigned to the Kindergarten students. I brought this to the attention of the Board at the annual maintenance review and the bathroom was remodeled immediately. It had been that way for almost 20 years!

Reaffirm **mission and vision statements** and weigh planning and initiatives against those statements. This will help to maintain focus and keep you and the staff on track as to your stated purpose and goals.

Develop **Christmas concert** or Winter Concert Committee.

Talk to staff about **Christmas social.**

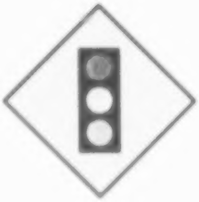
Create a school **song, chant, poem** if your school does not have one. Be sure to include the students!

"Celebrate! Take the time to create rituals that celebrate important events in the life of your school community."

Establish pre-school student and family contact list.

Celebrate Staff Appreciation Week in February. Don't forget to involve the parents, students, and community.

Random Acts of Craziness



Spring

Research to find opportunities to nominate students, colleagues, parents for **awards**. Many consider being nominated for an award a high honour. Some schools and administrators are hesitant to nominate people for awards out of concern that others will be left out or omitted or feel they have been passed over. Consider talking about the award and the nominee(s) in a very open way so that the reasons for the nomination and the achievements of the nominee are well known. Also consider having a committee responsible for finding awards and submitting nominations so that there are many involved in the process. It is also important for the principal to feel that this process enhances the positive climate of the school and is a celebration of everyone involved, not exclusive to the nominee(s).

Consult the following:

- Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation – Special Subject Councils
- Saskatchewan School Based Administrators
- Canadian Association of Principals
- Saskatchewan School Trustees Association
- Saskatchewan Council of Educational Administrators
- League of Educational Administrators, Directors and Superintendents
- *Readers' Digest*
- Prime Minister's Awards for Teaching Excellence
- Also consider an on-line search (start under Awards-Teacher, or Awards-Student) for national and international opportunities.

Plan Play Days, Sports Days, **Track and Field**.

Consider:

- Hi/Low Track and Field for Elementary Schools
- Game-based Play Days for Elementary Schools
- School colours, uniforms, cheers and chants for Track and Field Meets.

Review **mission and vision statements** and look at the year's events through that lens. Did the actions of the school reflect those statements? Will those statements provide guidance for next year or will they need to be looked at to more accurately reflect what the purpose and mission of the school is?

Winding Down the School Year

Establish **teams and committees** for the upcoming school year.

- Special Education
- School Improvement
- Technology
- Curriculum initiatives
- Sunshine
- Sports
- Cultural Programming
- Teacher's Association – LINC, Communications, Staff Rep., etc.
- Others that are specific to your school and school division

Establish plan for **orientation** of students. Prepare transition plan for parents.

- Grade 5, 6, 7, 8, to High School
- Playschool or preschool to Kindergarten
- Kindergarten to Grade 1

Prepare for school **field trips and environmental trips.**

- Consult school division policy regarding field and environmental trips.
- Ensure all paper work is completed and board approval is obtained well in advance.
- Book transportation.
- Prepare persmission slips.
- Ensure ratio of students to supervisors are met.
- Update "bus box" (paper towels, garbage bags, toilet paper, etc) and first aid kit.

Make arrangements for **school pictures** in September.

Discuss year-end **staff party**.

Plan **Awards Ceremony** and Colour Night.

Plan/encourage summer **professional growth opportunities**. Provide applications for staff.

Revise Student Handbook, **School Policy Manual** and submit to Director and School Board for approval prior to the start of school.

Creating a Supportive School Climate: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Opens

- ✓ Facility review
- ✓ Review school handbook, student handbook and school policy
- ✓ Consult Director about facility review
- ✓ Meet with staff about programming/school activities
- ✓ Activate Education Week Committee

Fall

- ✓ Visit each classroom each day
- ✓ Prepare list of SRC members
- ✓ Hold regular assemblies
- ✓ Meet with Parent Advisory Council
- ✓ Create schedule for monthly fun/spirit days
- ✓ Plan intramurals
- ✓ Plan social skills programs
- ✓ Reaffirm mission and vision
- ✓ Preliminary graduation preparation
- ✓ Update bulletin boards, hallway art
- ✓ Plan list of extra-curricular activities
- ✓ Plan career day with guidance counsellor
- ✓ Celebrate Education Week
- ✓ List "cards to remember"
- ✓ Review OH&S requirements
- ✓ Talk with teachers about "welcome to school" plans
- ✓ Send out school newsletter
- ✓ Plan field and environmental trips

Winter

- ✓ Participate in fundraising events
- ✓ Update facility maintenance list
- ✓ Reaffirm mission and vision statements
- ✓ Set up Christmas concert
- ✓ Have fun at the staff social
- ✓ Organize a school song, poem, etc.
- ✓ Establish pre-school list
- ✓ Staff Appreciation Week

Spring

- ✓ Research student and staff awards
- ✓ Plan Play Day, Spirit Days, Track & Field
- ✓ Review mission and vision
- ✓ Establish teams and committees for next year
- ✓ Plan student orientation
- ✓ Plan school field trips
- ✓ Update "bus box"
- ✓ Send calendar home to parents
- ✓ Set date for school pictures in fall
- ✓ Plan Awards Ceremony and Color Night
- ✓ Discuss staff year-end celebration
- ✓ Highlight summer professional growth opportunities
- ✓ Revise student/ school handbook and School Policy Manual

Resources

Deal, T.E., Peterson, K.D. (1994). *The leadership paradox: Balancing logic and artistry in schools.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Deal, T.E., Peterson, K.D. (1998) "How Leaders Influence the Culture of Schools." *Educational Leadership, 56.*

De Bono, E. (2000). *Six thinking hats.* London, ON: Penguin.

Fullan, M., Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's worth fighting for? Working together for your school.* Andover, MA: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands in Association With The Ontario Public School Teacher's Federation.

Johnson, S. (c 1998). *Who moved my cheese?* [videorecording]. Port Perry, ON: Owen Stewart Performance Resources.

Josephson, M. (1995). *Making ethical decisions.* CA: Josephson Institute of Ethics.

Kidder, Born. (1998-1999). "Resolving Ethical Dilemmas In The Classroom". *Educational Leadership,* 56, 4.

Lundin, Stephen C. (c 2000). *Fish! A remarkable way to boost morale and improve results.* New York, NY: Hyperion.

Lundin, S.C. and Parke, K. (c 1998). *Fish! Catch the energy and release the potential* [videorecording]. Markham, ON: Owen Stewart Performance Resources.

Ramsey, Robert D. (1996). *The principal's book of lists.* Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. (1997). *Leading the learning community.* Regina, SK: Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

Stephanson, S. (1994). *School based planning: Talking and growing together.* Brampton, ON: School Success Consulting.

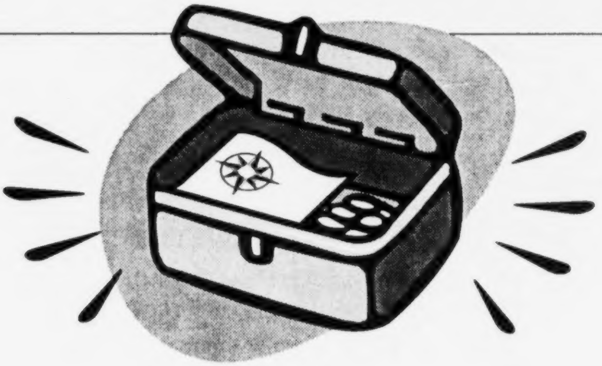
The Teachers' Federation Act. (1997). Regina, SK: Queens Printer.

The Teaching Profession of Saskatchewan Code of Ethics. (2000). Saskatoon, SK: Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

Creating a Supportive School Climate

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Creating a Supportive School Climate
2. Reflecting on School Culture
3. Cultural Inventories
4. Questions to Consider
5. Celebrations
6. Organization and Planning: Organizing Assemblies
7. Random Acts of Craziness
8. Organization and Planning: Winding Down the School Year

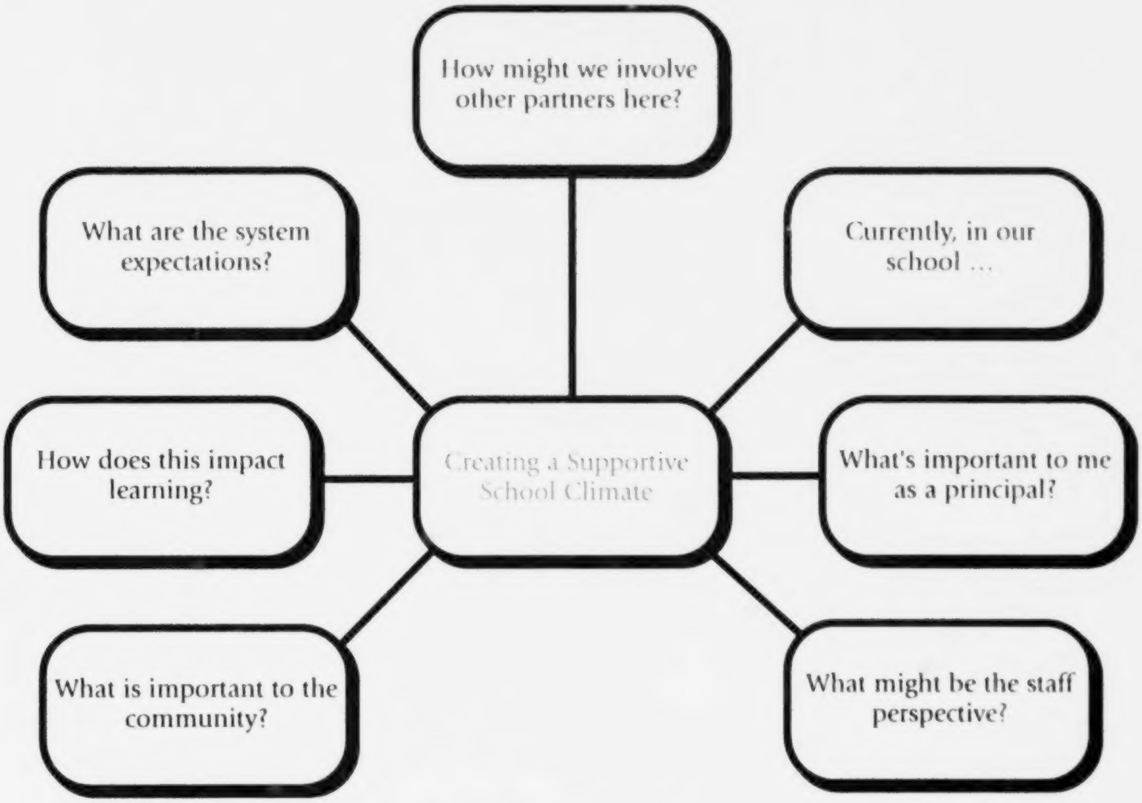


Flexibility: Creating a Supportive School Climate

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Creating a Supportive School Climate.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school ...
How does this impact learning?
Creating a Supportive School Climate
What's important to me as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Creating a Supportive School Climate

Shaping Culture Demands Constant Attention

Developing a new culture is akin to gardening. Just as weeds can take over a garden if it is left unattended, bad culture will inevitably drive out the good unless the desired culture is tended to. Good cultures require hard work to establish and maintain; bad cultures do not. Good cultures require constant cultivation; bad cultures are low maintenance. As James Champy advises, "Only a very strong, constantly cultivated culture can prevent the weeds of mistrust, disrespect, and uncooperativeness from taking over the garden" (p. 84). Shaping culture is not a task to complete; rather, it is an ongoing commitment.

DuFour and Eaker, 1998, pp.147-148

Cultural Inventories

There are a number of inventories available which invite staff to consider the unique culture or climate of the school. One of the benefits of spending time looking at school cultures is that it provides an opportunity to look at the many variables of a school culture, to dialogue and to share understandings.

The following are excellent resources for examining and reflecting on school culture.

Stephanson, S. (1994) *School-Based Planning, School Success Consulting*, Brampton, ON.

Peterson K. & Deal T. (2002). *The Shaping School Culture Fieldbook*. Jossey-Bass.

The National Staff Development Council has a number of valuable resources. For more information check out the web site: www.nsdc.org/jsd

The Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development is a valuable resource as is their publication, *Educational Leadership*. Check out the web site at www.ascd.org

SPDU also has a number of resources and materials on the topic of School Culture and School Climate. The contact for SPDU is: spdu@stf.sk.ca

School Culture – Questions to Consider

1. *What are the norms in your school?*

2. *What is the vision in your school? Would staff replies be similar or dissimilar?*

3. *What are your established traditions and rituals?*

4. *Are there identifiable sub-cultures or sub-groups in your school? What do these sub-cultures value?*

5. *What evidence is there of caring, celebration and humor?*

6. *What do staff talk about in the staff room?*

7. *If one were to walk into your school, what would the individual see?*

Celebrations

Tips For Incorporating Celebration in the Culture of a School

1. **Explicitly** state the purpose for the celebration.

   Remind staff and students about the importance of the celebration and its connection to the vision, values and culture of the school.

2. **Make** celebrations everyone's responsibility.

   Promoting shared values is everyone's business in a professional learning commmunity, and celebration is one of the best ways to promote values.

3. **Establish** a clear link between public recognition and the advancement of vision and values.

   Any public commendation should always be accompanied by a story that specifically explains how the recipients have advanced or modeled the vision and values of the school.

4. **Create** opportunities for lots of recipients.

   Celebration is most effective in promoting the values of a learning community when it is structured so that all staff members feel that they have the opportunity to be publicly recognized and applauded for their individual efforts and contributions. The most effective programs will provide for a wide distribution of recognition. Principals can accomplish this if they aggressively seek out simple examples of their values at work and evidence of incremental improvement - and then simply celebrate their findings!

Adapted from *The Principal Series*, ASCD

Celebrating as you Journey:

- Remember to involve the students as much as possible
- birthdays (especially the milestones)
- holidays
- teacher or student achievements (awards, recognitions, etc.)
- community historic events
- National theme days and weeks:
  www.communication.gc.ca/events
    - Feb.15: National Flag Day of Canada
    - International Women's Week
    - International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
    - National Wildlife Week (second week of April)
    - International Dance Day (April 29: fixed date)
    - Information Technology Week
    - Aboriginal Awareness Week
    - Canadian Environment Week (first week of June)
    - Citizenship Week
    - Canada Career Week (first week of November)
    - National Child Day (November 20: fixed date)
- International Theme Days and Weeks:
    - World Health Day
    - International Day of Families
    - International Youth Day
    - International Literacy Day
    - World Space Week
    - International World Teacher's Day
    - Universal Children's Day
    - Human Rights Day
- have a food fair, science fair, cultural fair
- fine arts expositions
- theme days: crazy hair day, Hawaii day, story book day, color days

Organization and Planning

Organizing Assemblies

Assemblies are important. They provide students and staff members with opportunities not available in the classroom. They also serve as an important training ground for teaching students how to behave properly in large groups.

Expectations Are Important

Staff members and students must know what behavior is expected of them during assemblies.

- Make staff members and students aware of the positive expectations for assembly behavior at the beginning of the school year. State expectations clearly and simply, and explain consequences for misbehaving. Carry out these consequences when necessary.

- Provide staff members and students with ample advance notice of assemblies. At times, pre-assembly materials may be included in daily lesson plans. Also, teachers should plan their classes around assemblies to avoid scheduling tests, special guests, or field trips during that time.

- Require all students for whom the program is being tailored to attend the assembly. An exception may be the students whose behavior might disrupt the assembly.

Schedule Quality Assemblies

Many factors contribute to quality, meaningful assemblies.

✓ Consider the scheduling of assemblies: how many, how long, how often, what time, what day, and for whom.

✓ Plan a structured beginning for each assembly; a formal and detailed introduction is a must and sets the tone for the assembly. This introduction may be presented by a representative of the student or parent council.

✓ Make sure audiovisual equipment is in good working order before the day of the assembly.

- ✓ Plan ahead. Quality assemblies are well orchestrated.

- ✓ Involve individuals or groups who will make a meaningful presentation in your school. Check their references and involve both staff members and students in the selection process.

Possible presenters include civic groups, law enforcement groups, business people, local authors and personalities, and people involved with youth groups or youth problems.

- ✓ Attend assemblies at other schools.

- ✓ Pay attention to cost. Surprisingly, you can schedule high quality programs for little or no cost. A higher price doesn't mean a better program. Find a sponsor for your assemblies if possible. This will minimize your cost.

When an effort is made to demonstrate to staff members and students that assemblies are important and the proper behavior will be expected, they won't want to miss the programs.

School administrators will be scheduling entertaining and informative programs for attentive audiences, and presenters will leave with a positive feeling toward the school.

It takes an effort and a commitment, but you can plan meaningful, manageable assemblies.

References

- *Tips for Principals*, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091. www.nassp.org

Random Acts of Craziness to Add Laughter to Your Life

Ideas for Teachers (and Principals)

Try some of the following to give yourself a new outlook on life. Add some of your own. Make a checklist. Share your list with friends.

☐ Take music lessons. Not just plan old piano or guitar lessons. Try something unusual, like the accordion, tuba, bagpipes, or marimba.
☐ Take a different route to work.
☐ Listen to comedy tapes in the car or on the bus.
☐ Take flying lessons, skiing lessons, or skydiving lessons.
☐ Try skateboarding, inline skating, hot air ballooning, or flying a kite.
☐ Dust off some old skills and use them. Dig out a yo-yo, hula hoop, or jump rope and see what you can do.
☐ Try to learn how to wiggle your ears, raise one eyebrow at a time, or touch your nose with your tongue.
☐ Say hello to people you don't know. Start up a conversation.
☐ Call someone on the phone who you haven't talked to in years.
☐ Strike up a conversation when someone calls you with the wrong number.
☐ Start a book in the middle or read the ending first.
☐ Make up your own recipe, game or song.
☐ Sing hello when you answer the phone or greet your class.
☐ Put a marking pen or crayon between your toes and try to draw.
☐ Take an adult class in clowning or stand-up comedy.
☐ Wear a red clown nose when you go out today.
☐ Play classical music for your class and lead the orchestra with your "baton" (ruler, pointer, or flyswatter). Wear a wig or a hat for added effect.
☐ Make the first thing you say to people something that will brighten their day.
☐ Face everyone when you get on an elevator.
☐ Whistle a song all the way through.
☐ Wear wild underwear.
☐ Drive your car with a puppet on your hand. Wave at people with the puppet when you stop for a red light.
☐ Think up your own acts of craziness and don't be afraid to use them.
☐ ____
☐ ____
☐ ____

If you had your life to live over, would you laugh more? Today is the first day of the REST of your life. Give laughter a chance. Start right now.

Organization and Planning

Winding Down the School Year

When getting ready to begin a school year, principals can focus most of their time and energy on tasks related to opening school in relative peace. At the end of school year, however, principals must get ready to close the school year while still operating the school. The following is a list of suggestions principals need to consider when winding down the school year.

Staff

- ✓ Ask staff members about their preferences in class schedules for the following school year so they can be considered when developing class and room assignments. (Although teacher preferences cannot be guaranteed, they should be considered.)
- ✓ Determine what staff positions need to be filled for the following school year.
- ✓ Ask staff members for their summer addresses, telephone numbers and other information in case you must contact them during the summer.
- ✓ Use a key inventory sheet to verify that all keys are accounted for.
- ✓ Obtain staff input concerning revisions to the staff handbooks.
- ✓ Ensure that all records have been properly secured for the summer.

Students

- ✓ Issue the final exam schedule.
- ✓ Finalize plans to transfer student records to and from other schools.
- ✓ Finalize plans to determine and report final grades.
- ✓ Finalize plans to distribute final report cards to students.
- ✓ Confirm that new students have been registered.

- ✓ Review discipline files to determine appropriate information to be purged based on district policy.
- ✓ Remind students to maintain appropriate behavior and dress as the school year nears completion.
- ✓ Remind students of policies relating to school visits in case other schools in the area have closed earlier than your school.
- ✓ Review plans for any field trips that will be taken during the last few weeks of the year.
- ✓ Finalize book rental fees for the next school year and inform students when and where they can pay fees for the next school year.
- ✓ Develop and implement a plan to collect all books from students. It is a good idea to have a log-in book that students sign and date when they return books.
- ✓ Remind students to check the lost and found to pick up items that belong to them. Students should sign for the article(s) they claim.
- ✓ Make plans to dispose of any unclaimed lost and found items.
- ✓ Establish a locker clean-out schedule for students, informing them that any items remaining in lockers at the end of school will be discarded.
- ✓ Let students know when they can pick up locker combinations for the new school year.

Parents

- ✓ Inform parents of outstanding fees and the deadlines for paying them.
- ✓ Inform parents of date, time and location of awards and graduation ceremonies.

Custodians

- ✓ Develop plans for summer maintenance for the buildings and grounds.

- ✓ Make sure all maintenance and repair requests have been developed and completed or will be completed during the summer.
- ✓ Establish custodial work schedules for the summer.
- ✓ Establish plans to check all lockers for removal of items during the summer and to make any necessary repairs to lockers.

Nutrition Workers

- ✓ Ensure that all reports regarding the cafeteria are completed.
- ✓ Establish work schedules for the following school year.
- ✓ Develop plans for proper storage of food items during the summer.
- ✓ Develop requests for the following school year.
- ✓ Make sure proper inventory lists for equipment and food items have been developed.

Bus Drivers

- ✓ Contact bus drivers to make sure all discipline referrals have been handled.

Office Operation

- ✓ Ensure all local reports have been or will be submitted in a timely fashion.
- ✓ Take inventory of all office supplies and equipment.
- ✓ Order any necessary office supplies for the next school year.
- ✓ Check with teachers to make sure all appropriate book orders have been submitted.
- ✓ Develop work schedules for office personnel for the summer and the next school year.
- ✓ Determine work schedules for student workers in the office for the next school year.
- ✓ Develop a plan for use of the building during the summer.

- ✓ Schedule any office equipment repair or replacement.
- ✓ Check inventory of all books that students have turned in and make necessary binding and/or page repairs.
- ✓ Order any necessary forms used in the operation of the office.
- ✓ Review and update personnel files and move to central office.
- ✓ Develop a plan for delivery of mail and/or packages if the office is closed during the summer.

A.V. Services

- ✓ Take inventory of all media equipment and develop a schedule for repair and replacement.
- ✓ Order any new equipment.
- ✓ Update inventory for the media centre holdings.
- ✓ Order new media centre holdings.
- ✓ Make needed repairs to existing holdings.
- ✓ Establish summer work schedules for media personnel.

The list of items presented for winding down a school year for principals is extensive. It may not include all items for your building, but you are encouraged to use it and add other items that are specific to your school. Such a list will make your work as a principal more efficient and effective as you prepare for the transition from one school year to the next.

Reprinted with permission from *A Reference Guide for School Administrators,*
Alberta Teachers' Association

Supporting Teaching and Learning

Supporting
Teaching and
Learning

Introduction 110

Instructional Leadership 112

Professional Growth 114

Staff Development 116

Staff Supervision and Evaluation 117

Building the Profession 118

Activities For Your School 119

  Before School Opens 119

  Fall 119

  Winter 121

  Spring 122

  Supporting Teaching and Learning: School Activities
    At A Glance 124

Resources 125

Travel Kit 126

Supporting Teaching and Learning

Introduction

The Education Act (1995) Section 175(1) says the principal shall:

- organize the program of courses and instruction approved by the board of education or the conseil scolaire for the school;
- co-operate with the universities in programs for the education and training of teachers;
- conduct, in co-operation with the staff, a continuing program of planning and evaluation with respect to the objectives, curriculum, pedagogy and effectiveness of the instructional program of the school;

The Role of the Principal

The principal is responsible for promoting a primary focus on student learning within the school. When principals are actively involved in and supportive of the instructional program, they send a strong message to the entire school community about the importance of teaching and learning.

Principals are considered the instructional leader of the school and play a major role in the teaching and learning that goes on in the school.

Familiarity with the following is important in supporting the instructional teams in your school:

- The provincial curriculum,
- School division policies and programs related to instruction,
- Resource-based learning, including the use of learning technologies,
- Instructional strategies and approaches,
- Individualization of instruction, and the adaptive dimension
- Evaluation and reporting of student achievement,
- Services and supports available to enhance instruction,
- Approaches and techniques for staff supervision,
- Research into instruction, and
- Instructional trends and innovations.

> *Education is the key to creating a society that is dynamic and productive, offering opportunity and fairness to all children and young people and a prosperous future for our province.*
>
> *Premier Lorne Calvert, 2002*

In Saskatchewan a key element of Adaptive Leadership is: Enhancing Staff Growth

- The ongoing growth and development of staff is a key leadership responsibility.
- Leaders recognize and value diversity among staff members and acknowledge their individual growth needs.
- Effective leaders promote the collaborative development and monitoring of personal growth plan for all staff members.
- Leaders recognize the value of a variety of staff growth opportunities to assist staff in meeting the learning and personal and social needs of children and youth including: school-based or division-based inservice education, professional reading and action research, attendance at conferences and workshops, and longer-term courses of study.

Fostering Change and Renewal

- Leaders play a crucial role in creating conditions that build trust and encourage change.
- Where continual growth and learning is evident, the leaders have encouraged risk-taking, generated creative tension and the expectation that things will change.
- Change and renewal can be fostered through data collection and reflection on the data to guide decision-making.
- A critical leadership strategy in fostering change and renewal is action research. This involves critical thinking about the current state and the desired future, collection and analysis of data, and the implementation of action plans.

Sask. Learning, 2003

School Division Policy

As you consider your role as an instructional leader in the school, review the sections in your school division policy that speak to this topic. Make jot notes in the box provided.

Policies and Practices from my School Division

-
-
-
-
-

Instructional Leadership

?
Information Here

F.A.Q. "What does it mean to be an instructional leader in the school?"

Consider:
Instructional leadership is one dimension of the role of principal. However, it is as much the role of the principal to create a climate in which leadership can flourish as it is to provide direct leadership.

> *Instructional leadership does not solely depend on the principal. School administrators understand and use a leadership style appropriate for professionals; solve problems through collaboration, team, or group decision making; know their staff members and delegate authority; communicate and build cohesiveness; and use their position to recognize and reward accomplishments of both staff and students.*
>
> Sergiovanni (1994)

Resources to Remember

- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development www.ascd.org
- NCSD: National Council For Staff Development
- STF – SPDU – Saskatchewan Professional Development Unit
- Numerous reports on instructional leadership at http://www.ssta.sk.ca/research/instruction
- "Principals for our Changing Schools", SSTA Module

> *Research suggests that leadership provided by other members of the school team such as "lead teachers, assistant principals, grade-level heads, central office supervisors and teams of teachers are often the most critical factors in improving teaching and learning.*
>
> Servgiovanni (1994)

Five Assumptions of High Quality Staff Development

- Quality teaching makes a difference in student learning
- Teachers and principals can improve their practice through professional learning.
- The professional learning of teachers is a central factor in determining the quality of teaching.
- The professional learning of principals is a central factor in determining the quality of their instructional leadership.
- The structures and culture that surround the school play a critical role in determining the quality of professional learning experienced by teachers and principals.

D. Sparks, ASCD (2001)

Reflections on Staff Professional Growth

- *How can I build a community of instructional leaders? Supporting the professional growth of staff members is one way to begin this process. Setting an example as a continuous learner yourself is another.*
- *How might I encourage and support innovative teaching and learning?*
- *In what ways can I actively support beginning teachers?*

Helping First Year Teachers

Professional Growth

> *Professional growth refers to the entire range of formal as well as informal learning opportunities that encourage and support individuals in reaching their full potential as teachers. This understanding of professional growth views teachers as decision makers and problem solvers who are capable of identifying many of their own learning needs, who accept responsibility for professional decisions and actions that are within their control, who are committed to self-assessment, personal professional renewal and lifelong learning.*
>
> Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (2001)

Consider the following when supporting the professional development of your colleagues:

Professional Growth Needs Assessments

- Set an example of being a continuous leader yourself. Seek out professional development opportunities that are outside your areas of expertise, teaching areas and comfort zones.
- Encourage this kind of risk taking among all staff.
- Take an active role in planning of local association.
- Meet with teachers at the beginning of the school year as to their personal professional goals and professional development needs. Follow up regularly throughout the year as to progress towards achieving these goals. See the Travel Kit for needs assessment instruments you can use.
- Determine and promote professional development opportunities and curriculum implementation workshops scheduled for the school division.
- Consider promoting team teaching units. Be aware that support is needed in order for teachers to find time to work together. Support may also be required in combining and scheduling classrooms, providing equipment and doing whatever it takes to facilitate the needs of the teachers and students in preparing for and taking part in team teaching.
- Support peer coaching and like-grade, like-subject and like-school planning and development sessions.
- Share among staff long-range plans, unit plans, year-at-a-glance plans.

Our principal prepared units for the science curriculum. The units were for everyone to use. They even included resource tubs!

Effective Professional Growth Opportunities

Consider these guidelines when working with colleagues on professional growth opportunities:

- Respect the individual and the school community.
- Focus on helping to achieve student learning goals.
- Ensure guidelines are permanent, ongoing and planned.
- Involve teachers in identifying their learning needs.
- Involve follow-up and support for continuous learning opportunities.
- Commit adequate resources and time.
- Allow for opportunities to acquire a theoretical understanding of the knowledge and skills to be learned.
- Provide participants with time to work with each other.

Hawley, Villi (1999)

Remember that you are working with adults. Consider the principles of adult learning.

- Participation is voluntary.
- Involves collaborative facilitation and leader-learner cooperation.
- Includes a combination of action and reflection.
- Cultivates a spirit of critical reflection.
- Nurtures empowered, self-directed learners.
- Requires participant goal setting.

F.A.Q. "How do I support the professional development of teachers on my staff?

?
Information Here

Consider:

Self-Directed Opportunities for Professional Growth

- Professional reading
- Journal writing
- Completing accreditation courses and/or taking classes
- Conducting action research
- Acting as a cooperating teacher
- Creating a professional growth portfolio
- Reviewing lessons by watching videotapes
- Attending special subject councils
- Taking an educational leave
- Becoming involved in curriculum development

Professional growth opportunities that have been helpful to me:

Resources for Instructional Leadership

- Saskatchewan Learning – Evergreen Curriculum www:sasked.gov.sk.ca/docs/evergrn.html
- SPDU *Instructional Strategies* and *Diversity Series*
- *Taking Your Place in the Professional Community: A Handbook For Beginning Teachers* - STF
- *Creating a Supportive Environment: An Administrator's Handbook for Working With Beginning Teachers* – STF
- *Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools,* Third Edition – Costa & Garmston, (1994)

Staff Development

Staff development can differ from professional development in that all staff can be involved.

Characteristics of effective staff development:

- Incorporates collegiality and collaboration
- Is based on adult learning principles and change theory
- Requires leadership and administrative support
- Incorporates time for participants to understand and integrate learning
- Is perceived by participants to include appropriate incentives and rewards
- Is led by credible individuals
- Is most effective when delivered at the school level
- Is systematically planned and delivered
- Is cyclical, sustained and ongoing

(SSBA Module Two, p.78)

In his book, *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals,* (2002) Dennis Sparks stresses that staff development today must be fundamentally different from past practices if it is to produce high levels of learning for students and staff members. He states that high-quality staff development must:

- Focus on deepening teachers' content knowledge and pedagogical skills;
- Include opportunities for practice, research, and reflection;
- Be embedded in educators' work and take place during the school day;
- Be sustained over time; and
- Be founded on a sense of collegiality and collaboration among teachers and between teachers and principals in solving important problems related to teaching and learning.

Dennis Sparks (2002)

When planning staff development at your school, consider the following:

- Do a needs assessment to determine what the staff is looking for and what types of development opportunities would meet their needs.
- Encourage leadership from within the staff to plan and deliver development opportunities.

"Support innovation by putting real money into innovation to release staffs to step out and create."

Considerations Regarding Staff Professional Growth Opportunities:

- *As a leader, what is my role in encouraging meaningful staff development in our school?*
- *How will I know if the staff development has been meaningful to staff members?*
- *As an in-school administrator how might I assess the professional development needs of the staff?*

(SSBA Module Two, pp. 80-81)

Staff Supervision and Evaluation

?
Information
Here

F.A.Q. "Am I supposed to conduct evaluation and supervision of staff? I need to know about board policy, resources (books) professional growth plans, generic supervision forms, mentors and peers.

Consider:
This topic is one of interest and often concern for many in-school administrators. A first course of action is to consult your School Division Policy to find out what is required of staff and what is the role of the in-school administrator. Many school divisions have comprehensive staff supervision and evaluation plans that clearly indicate roles and responsibilities for the school-based administrator.

In planning the teacher supervision and evaluation process consider the following:

- Training and resources you require.
- Set up a schedule at the beginning of the year for classroom visits. Stick to the schedule!
- Use forms provided by the school division or ones that you and the staff develop together.
- Discuss the process with the staff. What things can you do as the in-school administrator that will be meaningful to the teacher?
- Consider alternative approaches to clinical supervision such as: portfolios, personal growth plans, mentoring, peer coaching.
- Always end conferences and written summaries with positive comments and thank the teacher for allowing you to be in their classroom.

Building the Profession

Along with being a member of a professional community comes the responsibility for bringing new members into the profession. You may find it useful to consult STF literature regarding the induction, support and mentoring of teachers new to the profession.

Consider the learning opportunities for staff, students and the entire school community that accompany inviting interns to the school. The Centre for School-Based Experience at the University of Saskatchewan and the Field Experience Office at the University of Regina can give you more information.

Consider the following when planning for interns in your school:

- Ensure staff is committed to the placement of an intern in their classroom.
- Consider a team approach to the placement of one or several interns.
- Provide resources – teacher desks, mailbox, locker, keys, school handbook, copier codes, and print resources such as curriculum guides.
- Provide welcoming activities. Include staff, students, local board, Parent/School Advisory Council.
- Ensure substitute teachers are booked for intern-cooperating teacher planning days.

Activities For Your School

Before School Opens

Consult with staff about **opening day procedures** for students and staff. This may include schedule of school activities, designation of rooms, etc.

Arrange for **staff, subject, or grade meeting.**

Ensure that **class lists** are available to be posted outside classrooms.

Unpack and sort **textbooks, supplies**. Ensure teachers have necessary materials, curriculum guides and resources for their classes and subjects.

Provide information about on-line access to the **Evergreen Curriculum.**

Provide information about access to **curriculum consultants.**

Promote upcoming learning opportunities in **curriculum, instruction and assessment.**

Consult teacher librarians regarding professional resources for teaching and learning.

Prepare list and contact potential substitutes.

Meet with the teacher assistants and other building para-professionals to review expectations, assignments, and learning needs.

Fall

Update and review **emergency response protocol.**

Revise **teaching assignments** if necessary.

Work with teachers on making the **start of school** as smooth as possible. Facilitate their needs for classroom furniture, equipment and supplies; discuss student placements; solve logistical problems.

Meet with teachers to discuss **referrals** to Educational Psychologist, Speech/Language Pathologist, Case Worker or Social Worker, School Nurse or Health Nurse. Ensure you have the correct forms to be used.

Ensure teachers have school division policy regarding assessment, **evaluation and reporting** of student achievement.

Discuss with teachers and applicable partners in education the **assessment, evaluation and reporting process.** Invite them to indicate support they might need from you. Examples might include:

- Requesting the principal to be at parent-teacher conferences where a third party might benefit the process.
- Requests to check report cards for grammar and spelling.

Check **Report Cards**. Are revisions needed? If major revisions are needed a committee may be formed to discuss, plan and make presentations to the staff. If minor revisions are needed they can be discussed at the first staff meeting so the report card can be sent to the printers.

Ensure you have a **year's supply of report cards** and envelopes.

Establish **dates** for report cards:

- Cut off date for marks.
- Schedule for meeting with teachers to view and sign report cards.
- Date report cards are to be handed out.

Discuss **informal supervision** with staff. Some in-school administrators call this MBWA (Management By Walking Around). Discuss what teachers and principal like to do, need to do, and have to do.

Meet with each teacher regarding **professional learning goals** for the year.

Consult with teachers, special education staff, parents/guardians to consider the requirements of **Special Needs Students.**

- Meet with the resource room teacher to discuss case load and students who will need teacher assistant time and an Individual Education Plan (IEP – it may be called something different in your school division).
- Establish the team that will work with the student.
- Have a meeting with the parents, student if appropriate, and the team to get input for the IEP.

- Know deadline for IEPs to be at the Division Office.

Work with teachers and school division to prepare and **submit locally developed, modified and alternate course offerings.**

Establish planning team for **Grassroots project.** Select topic and prepare submission for November deadline.

Organize **induction and mentoring programs** for your school. Mentor teachers are those who volunteer to help staff new to the building. Encourage mentor teachers to pay particular attention to all the unwritten, informal and routine things that happen in the school that the new teacher may not find out about.

Talk to teachers about their personal **professional growth plans.** How will those plans fit with school, division, and provincially offered opportunities?

Encourage the development of **professional portfolios.**

Encourage establishment of **professional partnerships.**

Winter

Establish timetable, procedures and policies for **first reporting period.**

- Ensure that parent-teacher conference notices are sent out well in advance.
- In some schools parents choose which teacher they would like to see at conference time. If this is the case in your school, send out a teacher-subject list with the conference notice.
- Revise the school map and signage if necessary so parents can find classrooms. Recruit student volunteers to act as guides on conference day.
- Consider conducting student-led conferences with portfolios as a basis for discussion.
- Discuss with staff your expectations for conferences. These may include that teachers see as many parents as possible, that notes be taken, that teachers advise you immediately if further action is needed, that abuse will not be tolerated at conferences and that you are available to support teachers if needed.
- Schools usually conduct conferences one of two ways – by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Select what you think

will work best for your school and communicate procedures and guidelines to parents. Establish ways to accommodate families with more than one child in school. They may have to see several teachers or travel to other schools on conference day.

- Lack of time is often a concern for holding effective conferences. Communicate to the parents how much time is set aside for conferences and have clocks at each table or visible in each room.
- Submit copies of all marks to Division Office (if requested) and ensure the school keeps copies for its marks book.
- Hold marks meetings with all teachers. Begin process of consultation if any student is to repeat a course offering.
- Ensure that teachers are communicating to parents any concerns they have about student progress well in advance of report card and conference dates.

Prepare class lists, teaching assignments and course offerings for **Semester 2.**

Prepare **January exam schedule.**

Meet with teachers to discuss professional growth plans.

Begin working on **enrolment** for Kindergarten.

Begin preliminary planning for next year's **graduation.**

Meet with teacher and special education teachers about students who are being flagged for special programs. Consult with parent and/or guardian as soon as this is determined.

Spring

Hold a mid-year or Semester 2 program review. This can include scheduling, library programs, Resource Room programming, caseloads for Speech Language Pathologist and Caseworker / Social worker.

Follow established procedures for **report cards and parent-teacher conferences.**

Meet with teachers to discuss professional growth plans.

Establish **year-end evaluation procedures.**

- Prepare and distribute guidelines for year-end evaluation including exam schedule, weighting of exams and course work, procedures and timelines for recommends.

- Schedule promotion meetings.
- Meet again with parents of students who will require special programs for the next school year.
- Issue report cards on last day. Do not issue ANY early. Obtain mailing addresses for anyone not able to pick up their report card.
- Submit final marks to school division office. Obtain copies for school marks book.

Establish a **"September" file.** There will be lots of things done in May and June that you will need to refer to when you get back to school in the fall. Things you may include in the file:

- Class lists and splits
- Timetables for gym, computer lab, art room, etc.

Checklist of **year-end duties:**

- School cleaning of common areas – staff room, art room, music room, etc.
- Cumulative files – completed according to school division requirements.
- Attendance, registers.
- Procedure for storing year-end tests and exams.
- Textbook inventory and requests.
- Scheduling of facilities – art room, library, computer lab, etc.
- Curriculum guides for next year ordered.
- Update student supply lists and prepare copies for distribution with final report card.

Planning **staff assignments.**

- Determine staffing for next year. Consult and finalize with teachers their teaching load.
- Meet with parents of special needs students to determine programming for next year. Assign support staff.
- Hand out yearly calendar with scheduled days and hours of employment to all support staff.

Meet with staff to establish **schedules for next year.** Invite incoming staff if possible. Establish schedules for gym, art room, computer lab, music room, etc. Once the timetables have been completed copy and distribute to all staff. Keep copies in your "September" file.

Teachers like to teach certain subjects at certain times of the day. To ensure equity when timetabling do this in a go-around starting with a different person each time.

Supporting Teaching & Learning: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Opens

- ✓ Establish school opening procedures
- ✓ Arrange grade/subject meetings
- ✓ Prepare class lists
- ✓ Unpack texts, supplies
- ✓ Ensure each teacher has access to Evergreen Curriculum
- ✓ Prepare contact lists of school-based consultants
- ✓ Consult with teacher-librarians and special education staff re: resources
- ✓ Prepare substitute lists
- ✓ Meet with building para-professionals

Fall

- ✓ Review/update emergency response protocol
- ✓ Review teaching assignments
- ✓ Stay in touch with teachers re: start-up needs
- ✓ Review protocol for student referrals
- ✓ Review division and school assessment & evaluation practices and processes
- ✓ Review student reporting documents
- ✓ Establish report card and conferencing dates
- ✓ Meet with staff regarding professional growth plans for the upcoming year
- ✓ Review special needs students
- ✓ Review requirements and protocol for locally developed/modified or alternative courses
- ✓ Establish a Grassroots team
- ✓ Organize an induction and mentoring program
- ✓ Establish local partnerships
- ✓ Support staff professional development needs

Winter

- ✓ Finalize and oversee procedures and expectations for the first reporting period
- ✓ Prepare course offerings and class lists for Semester Two
- ✓ Meet with teachers to discuss professional growth plans
- ✓ Begin planning for next fall's kindergarten enrolment
- ✓ Begin planning graduation activities
- ✓ Meet with teachers and special education staff re: students who may require special programming
- ✓ Remember to build in P.D. at each staff meeting

Spring

- ✓ Organize a mid-year program review
- ✓ Organize reporting and conferencing for Semester Two
- ✓ Meet with teachers regarding professional growth plans
- ✓ Establish year-end procedures
- ✓ Establish a "September" file
- ✓ Prepare a list of year-end duties
- ✓ Discuss staff assignments for next year
- ✓ Begin planning fall schedules
- ✓ Plan for fall professional development retreat

Resources

Costa, A.J., Garmston, R.J. (1994). *Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Garmston, R.J., Wellman, B.M. (1999). *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Saskatchewan School-Based Administrators' Professional Development Program, Module Two. (2000). Saskatoon, SK: Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Statement of Policy and Bylaws. (2002-3). Saskatoon, SK: Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.

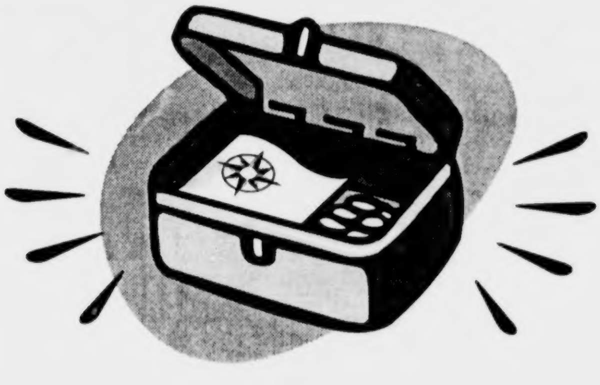
Sergiovanni, T.J. (1995). *The Principalship: A Reflective Practice Perspective.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Barow.

Sparks D. (2002). *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals.* National Staff Development Council.

Supporting Teaching and Learning

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Supporting Teaching and Learning
2. Reflecting for Planning the Journey
3. Working with Staff: Helping First-Year Teachers
4. Working with Staff: Substitute Teachers
5. Roles & Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional
6. Effective Staff Development
7. Planning for Effective Staff Development
    - A Map for Finding Common Ground
    - A Strategic Planning Map
    - Considering a Detour
8. Professional Success Through Professional Growth Practices
9. P.D.: Keeping the Momentum

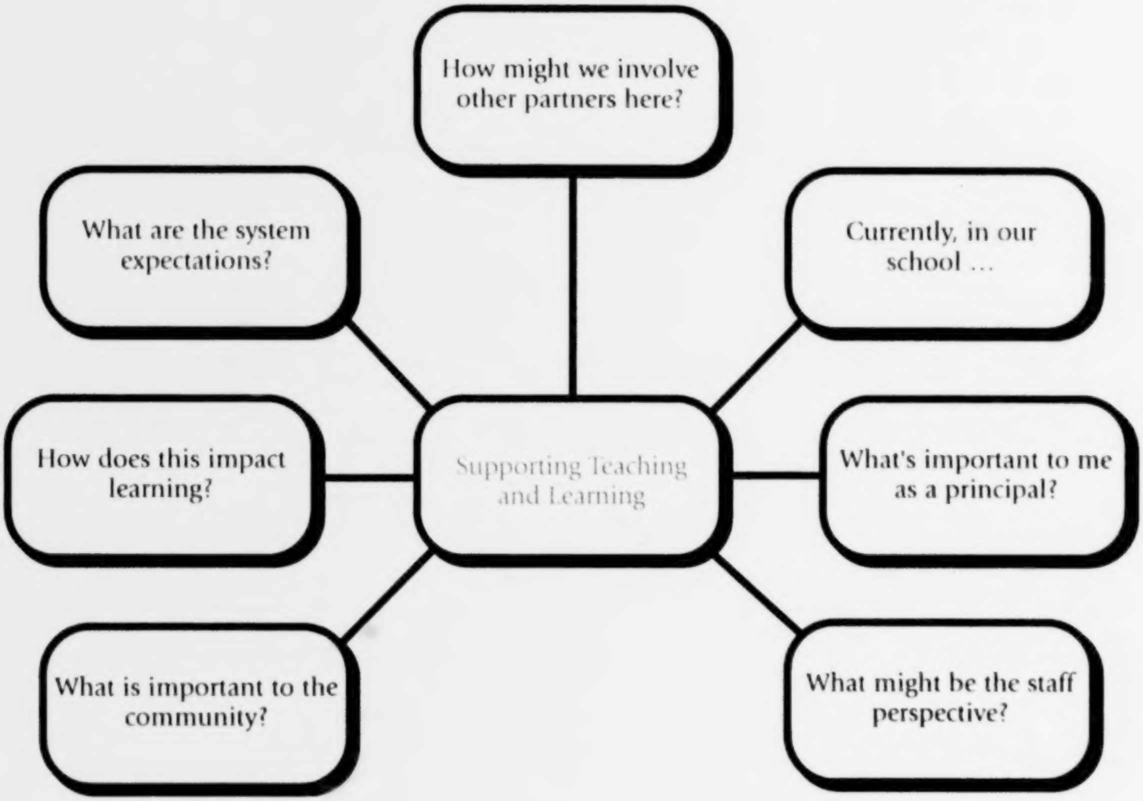


Flexibility: Supporting Teaching and Learning

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Supporting Teaching and Learning.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school ...
How does this impact learning?
Supporting Teaching and Learning
What's important to me as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Supporting Teaching and Learning

Reflecting for Planning the Journey

In what ways can I, as the principal be an advocate of the professional development process?

How might I model effective professional development practices?

What would I see, hear, and feel at a school that models productive, continuous learning?

Teachers are used to working as individuals. A part of professional development has to be teaching people to work together. How can I, as principal, facilitate the development of a team learning environment?

What are the characteristics of a learning community?

How do I support teachers professionally who are in various career stages? Is the support different or the same?

What are the roadblocks to effective professional growth?

What are my division's current policies on supervision and evaluation?

How has the staff incorporated their personal mission statements and or their professional growth plans into that of the school's?

Working With Staff

Helping First-Year Teachers

Principals can adopt a basic set of assumptions for a new teacher orientation and guidance that can turn first-year teachers' disenchantment into a period of growth and development. The assumptions target the principal's assistance for new teachers as either direct assistance or assistance through veteran colleagues.

Basic Assumptions for Principals

- Principals must accept that they cannot provide all the support a new teacher needs. They must endeavor to create a larger school climate of support by getting as many other people involved as possible.

- New teachers become bewildered by the realization that although they have pedagogical knowledge, they have not yet developed the skills necessary to actually teach day after day.

- Situations that seemed familiar when observed or tried during student teaching become dilemmas for new teachers as they take on numerous situational responsibilities for the first time.

- The new teacher must still learn how to discipline students. A parallel can be made for the discipline process between teaching and driving. "You get the license, then you learn how to drive."

- Parents have no concept of the need to make allowances for first-year teachers. Their power to add to the stress endured by new teachers is alarming.

- The principal should not be a parental figure for new teachers.

Direct Principal Assistance

✓ Begin programs to help new teachers as soon as possible. Assistance during the first two months is essential.

✓ Give first-year teachers an easier schedule than veterans. They also need clear delineation of tasks beyond the classroom so they can acquire an overall view of school-wide performance expectations.

- ✓ Identify a specific veteran teacher who will coordinate the new teacher support program. Veteran teachers can serve as mentors in this program. This will provide a focused staff development for new teachers that is consistent during the first several weeks of the school year.

- ✓ Ensure that the schedule of each new teacher and mentor is arranged so they are not teaching at the same time.

- ✓ Support avenues of financial flexibility for new teachers to provide supplementary materials and instructional supplies.

- ✓ Conduct faculty meetings as real learning experiences, leaving the sports schedules to be distributed in the mailboxes.

- ✓ Enhance the idea of teaching as a calling because this perspective influences the ethos of the building. Encourage questioning and collegial sharing.

- ✓ Make new teachers aware that while they may feel uncertain and maybe even humiliated at times, in many cases they have more answers than they realize. They bring vitality to the profession!

Principal Assistance Through Veteran Colleagues

- ✓ Provide each new teacher with a support group of colleagues and a mentor teacher who has been trained to assist him or her.

- ✓ Create a climate and specific opportunities in which new teachers talk with other new teachers as well as experienced colleagues about teaching. Managing instructional time, classroom discipline, curriculum standards, motivating and evaluating students, parent conferences, paper correction tips and grading techniques are possible topics.

- ✓ Support experienced teachers in helping new teachers to realize it is not only advisable, but necessary that they try certain strategies again and again in the classroom until these skills are mastered.

- ✓ Recognize the complexities of teaching and be complimentary to the enterprise of veteran teachers training new colleagues.

School Policies and Procedures Checklist

- ✓ Have a "new teachers" meeting before the school year begins.
- ✓ Assign a mentor teacher to each beginning teacher, even if there is no established mentor program. If possible, the mentor and beginning teachers should have the same planning period and teach the same subjects, but it is more important that they be in close proximity.
- ✓ Provide teacher handbooks and student handbooks.
- ✓ Discuss the time schedule: starting and ending times for students and teachers, bell schedule, lunch schedule.
- ✓ Introduce teachers to their department heads/unit leaders.
- ✓ Discuss extra duty, supervision of assignments and class sponsorships.
- ✓ Show them their classrooms and give them a tour of the entire school.
- ✓ Explain the procedure for obtaining additional texts, desks, etc.
- ✓ Give them classroom keys, teachers' editions of texts, curriculum guides, grade books and lesson plan books.
- ✓ Review the procedure for assigning lockers and distributing lunch tickets, insurance forms, etc.
- ✓ Explain grading procedures and requirements.
- ✓ Explain requirements regarding lesson plans, student attendance, disaster drills, early dismissals, etc.
- ✓ Discuss the principal's role as a facilitator and resource person.
- ✓ Explain the district's evaluation process, the evaluation instrument and the principal's role in evaluation.
- ✓ Review field trip procedures.
- ✓ Explain the procedure for requesting substitute teachers.

✓ Discuss copy machine rules, paper limits and who is responsible for making the copies. Also, address the issue of whether or not personal copying is allowed.

✓ Review the procedure for requesting audio visual equipment.

✓ Review rules regarding classroom parties, school dances and other related activities.

✓ Review the rules regarding visitors to the school or classroom.

✓ Discuss the procedures for allowing students to leave the classroom to go to the restroom, locker, counselor, office, etc.

Discipline Policies and Procedures Checklist

✓ Review the district and school discipline policies.

✓ Discuss what discipline situations warrant immediate referral to the office.

✓ Stress the importance of having a classroom discipline policy.

✓ Explain that they should not engage in a power struggle with students.

✓ Explain the importance of establishing a good rapport with the students, but also the need to maintain "social distance" and not try to be one of the students.

✓ Encourage them to keep administrators informed about any situation they feel they mishandled. Parents are certain to call the principal if they are upset or concerned about the way a situation was handled.

Communication Checklist

✓ Discuss the importance of communication with parents.

✓ Explain that familiarity with the community is important. Students should see teachers outside the classroom, in the community, and at co-curricular activities. It also helps the teacher to see student talents that might not be demonstrated in the classroom.

✓ Stress the importance of maintaining a cooperative relationship with the staff.

- ✓ Stress the importance of exhibiting a generally positive and optimistic attitude about teaching and education.
- ✓ Explain the importance of professionalism.
- ✓ Review the many roles of teachers: teacher, counselor, disciplinarian, parent.
- ✓ Prepare a welcome packet that includes a list of day-care centres, a map of the town, local banks, realtors and phone numbers of people who might be helpful to teachers who are new to the area.
- ✓ Prepare monthly calendars that list deadlines for reports or dates of major activities.

Classroom Policies and Procedures Checklist

- ✓ Stress the importance of consistency.
- ✓ Discuss the importance of the teacher – rather than the bell – dismissing the class.
- ✓ Review the need to give clear, logical directions appropriate to the level of the students.
- ✓ Stress the importance of giving positive reinforcement and monitoring students' comprehension.
- ✓ Review the importance of using a variety of teaching activities to avoid student boredom and/or frustration.
- ✓ Review the importance of frequent student assessment.
- ✓ Stress the importance of good record keeping.
- ✓ Review the referral process for special education, welfare and law enforcement agencies.
- ✓ Explain the importance of having a current folder for substitute teachers that includes a generic lesson plan that could be used in case of emergency, current rosters, seating charts, supervisory duties and a list of students with special needs.

Professional Development Checklist

✓ Show teachers where the school's professional library is located.

✓ Review the procedure for asking to attend workshops and conferences.

✓ Hold follow-up meetings to check on teachers' general progress and to answer any questions.

✓ Discuss the procedures and policies for the teachers' professional growth plans.

Our challenge as administrators is to help all teachers be leaders, professionals and role models. A good beginning is the first step to success.

Resources

- The STF hosts a Beginning Teachers' Conference in Saskatoon and Regina each September and October. Ensure that your beginning teachers are registered. As well, many jurisdictions hold orientation sessions for beginning teachers.

- Beginning Teacher Handbook: An Administrator's Guide, STF.

References:

- Adapted from *Tips for Principals*, National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091.
  www.nassp.org

Reprinted with permission from ATA.

Working With Staff

Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are important staff members and colleagues. Thoughtful preparation for the substitute is a shared responsibility between principal and teacher. A well-prepared substitute will ensure that the learning environment is maintained in the classroom and the school.

Things Substitutes Need to Know

Each classroom should have a substitute file with the following school-wide information:

- Fire drill information.
- Supervision duty procedures.
- Inclement weather procedures.
- Acceptable discipline methods.
- Attendance and dismissal procedures.
- Identification of bus students.
- Schedule of school times.
- Exceptional health needs.
- Integrated student information.
- Floor plan of the school.
- Emergency codes.

Individual teachers can add specific information for their class. Questions that need to be answered include:

- What is the length of the assignment?
- Who can provide assistance?
- Are there special needs students/teacher aid(s) in the class?
- Where are the class list, seating plan, register?
- Where are the day book/lesson plans, time table?
- Where is the staff room, nurse's room, lunch room, photocopier, staff and student washrooms?
- How do you access AV equipment and computers?
- What money has to be collected or what permission slips obtained?
- Who are the other staff members interacting in the classroom?
- Are there students who will be leaving the class during the day?
- What are the expectations for preparation time?

At the end of the day the substitute should:

- Leave the room tidy.
- Identify work completed and work substituted.
- Leave anecdotal remarks for the teachers.
- Check in at the office before leaving.
- Maintain confidentiality and a professional attitude about the school.

Reprinted with permission from ATA.

Roles and Responsibilities of the Paraprofessional

- assist individual students in performing activities initiated by the teacher;
- supervise children in the hallway, lunchroom, and playground;
- assist in monitoring supplementary work and independent study;
- reinforce learning in small groups or with individuals, while the teacher works with other students;
- provide assistance with individualized program materials;
- assist the teacher in observing, recording and charting behaviour;
- assist the teacher with crisis problems and behaviour management;
- assist in preparation/production of instructional materials and modifications;
- carry out instructional programs designed by the teacher;
- work with the teacher to develop classroom schedules;
- carry out tutoring activities designed by the teacher;
- assist the classroom teacher to include and involve the student with special needs in classroom and extra-curricular activities;
- assist in the observation and assessment of students as requested by the teacher/supervisor;
- maintain records relative to specific programming and student performance as requested by teacher/supervisor;
- assist in related duties which may be assigned because of specific needs (e.g., the maintenance and/or preparation of instructional and life skills materials);
- participate in parent-teacher conferences and assist with parent communication on request;

- supervise and/or participate with students in community-based programming when requested;
- assist the teacher to provide program adjustments that are suitable to the student's behavioral and emotional make-up;
- assist with carrying out behaviour management programming;
- assist with occupational and physical-therapy exercise under the direction of professional staff;
- assist with student's dressing and feeding;
- assist with sensory integration programming as outlined by the therapist (according to individual school division policy);
- administer medication and chart its distribution (according to school division policy);
- assist with toileting and toilet training programs;
- assist with a student's daily hygiene;
- work directly with students in different settings where a teacher is not available at the site (e.g., work experience placement);
- support students in their participation in activities in the community;
- support and train students in work placements under direction of the teacher(s);
- reinforce social and personal skills to ensure the successful inclusion of the student with special needs;
- attend professional development activities related to needs of students in the program; and
- assist with communication development, under the direction of the teacher and/or speech and language pathologist.

From *Teacher Assistant Handbook*, by Saskatoon Catholic Schools, 2000, Saskatoon: Author.
Reprinted with permission.

Effective Staff Development

- No more "drive by" staff development. External experts are not the answer.
- Principals and presenters must consider what the staff already know.
- Activities must consider what specific challenges people face in educating children.
- Professional development must be relevant.
- Activities must be connected to:
  - Teachers' personal goals
  - The needs of the school
  - Subject/content taught
  - Benefits for the school
  - Learning must be participatory in nature.
- Staff must be engaged in "active", rather than passive learning. It is good to model processes that we expect teachers to use with their students.
- Effectiveness lies in the provision of processes that allow for the internalization of new material or ideas. There must be follow through on a regular basis.
- Coaching occurs to reinforce new methods, skills, and knowledge.
- Development of engaged learning communities that:
  - Treat every colleague as a potential valuable contributor
  - Share and learn together
  - Share, discuss, and critique practices in public forums (parent meetings, journal articles, workshop facilitation, discussion boards)
  - Turn ownership of learning over to the learners: classroom practices assessed by teachers rather than outside agencies.
- Yearly professional growth activities have one focus (a purposefully redundant phrase!)

Printed with permission from C. Herrick, Principal, Unity Composite School, 2003.

Planning for Effective Staff Development

Some Maps....with Directions!!

"Teachers who know a lot about teaching and learning and who work in environments that allow them to know students well are the critical elements of successful learning."

Linda Darling-Hammond (1997)

"Human conversation is the most ancient and easiest way to cultivate the conditions for change – personal change, community and organizational change, planetary change. If we can sit together and talk about what's important to us, we begin to come alive."

Margaret Wheatley (2002)

Providing opportunities for staff members to talk about their perceptions, their learning needs and their vision is an important first step in determining a direction for a meaningful staff development process.

Some guiding thoughts:

- Allow staff members time to dialogue, dream and create.
- If possible, arrange for a retreat-like setting away from the telephones, copiers and computers.
- Model the risk taking and creative process.
- Have lots of chart paper, markers and chocolate.
- Encourage positive presuppositions.
- Come with an open and curious mind, with no preplanned outcome.
- Use processes that give each staff member an opportunity to contribute.
- Use a combination of large and small groups.
- Create opportunities for staff to work in unfamiliar and mixed groups.

A Map for Finding Common Ground

Marvin Weisbord (1995)

These activities can be facilitated during an extended retreat, or in small chunks throughout the school year.

Looking Back

Review the past: In small groups, and using chart paper, create three time lines:

1. The significant events in the school's history for a specific period of time (10 or 20 years as examples).
2. Trends in education and learning over the same period of time.
3. Social changes or challenges over the same time period.

- Once the time lines are posted and all have had a chance to view, ask each group to take a different time period and create a story about it. Ask them to consider the relationships between the story they tell and the other parts of the timeline. Give groups 20 minutes to create the story and five minutes to share with the large group.
- *Debrief:* What themes did you hear? What did you learn?
- Highlight that the wall is a symbol of everyone! The time lines and the stories represent that everyone has a story to tell in the much larger picture. These time lines can establish a mood in which people want to continue to work together.

A New Map

- Invite group members to create a "group mind map" of all the current trends affecting teaching and learning in your community today and might affect the future.
- Give each group member seven or eight colored dots. Ask them to put their dots on the trends that they consider most important: what do we really need to talk about?
- *Take a break....coffee....lunch....a walk.*
- Invite the large group to self select into smaller groups. Ask the smaller group to reinterpret the larger mind map and to even redo it from their point of view...highlighting what they believe is important. Give the groups 30 minutes to recreate and four

minutes to report to the larger group. This process invites group members to take ownership for their issues and to share information with the larger community.

- Invite the group to consider what they heard…is there common ground?

Proud and Sorry

Invite groups to reflect on what they are doing currently in the area of teaching and learning: what are we doing that makes us proud? What are we doing or not doing that makes us sorry?

Invite the groups to share in a "go-round" fashion.

Arrange for some personal reflection time using the theme: "How do I feel about what I have heard?" "What are my reactions right now?"

Approaching Our Destination:

Regroup into mixed groups. Ask each group to put themselves ten or 20 years into the future and imagine that it is that day. With the future date as a reference, ask each group to write all of the characteristics of our learning community on a flipchart. They are creating ideal scenarios.

On another flipchart ask the group to list the barriers that need to be overcome in order to make this ideal scenario happen. Ask the group to think of a creative way to report both the ideal and barriers. They will have 45 minutes to prepare this and five minutes to present their idealism.

At the end of all the presentations, ask individual groups to make three flipcharts:

- Describe what they consider to be a common future, based on what they have heard
- The 'hows' of all of the different innovative ideas, policies, plans and programs that might bring about this common future
- Unresolved differences

Once the lists are made, groups combine, compare and merge their lists. Using the three headings: common future, potential projects and unresolved differences, create a composite group list.

Take a break: a walk…..exercise…etc.

Invite a dialogue using the stems:

- Given that we want to begin to see a common future for our learning community, in what ways can we rearrange our first list?
- Given that we want to begin to work towards a common future, what agreements can we make about potential projects?
- Given that we want to move towards a common future together, what unresolved differences do we need to acknowledge to each other?

Hint: don't expect too many direct answers, do expect lots of conversation and personal expression.

First steps

Once staff members have found common ground in their possible future, and what possible programs might get them there....

Regroup and look at what things they would like to do in the short term to get to the long term. Ask what kinds of resources will be needed. Whose assistance will be needed? Can they set some timelines? What are the specific action steps? Ask the groups to report to the larger group.

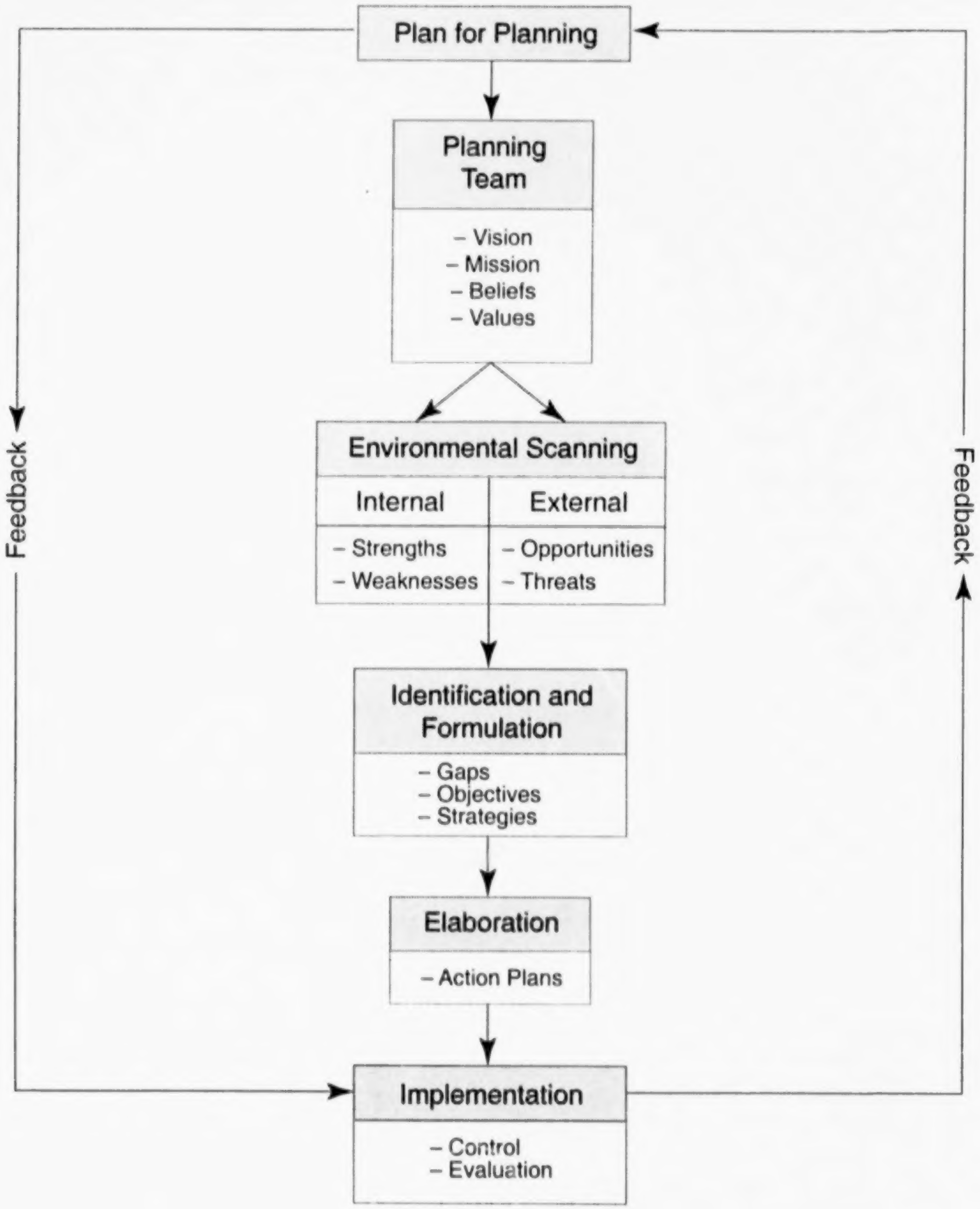
When all ideas have been put on the table, invite staff members to self select which activity they would like to work on. Allow these groups to meet and begin planning. Finally, ask the work groups to report to the large group.

As closure, invite a discussion about the original flipcharts. When do you meet again? How do we maintain momentum? Does there need to be a coordinating committee to make recommendations for what happens next, etc? It is best if these commitments are made publicly.

Thank the staff for their hard work. Enjoy!

A Strategic Planning Map

Adapted from Denis Hache (Orbit 1993)


Plan for Planning
Planning Team
– Vision
– Mission
– Beliefs
– Values
Environmental Scanning
Internal
External
– Strengths
– Weaknesses
– Opportunities
– Threats
Identification and Formulation
– Gaps
– Objectives
– Strategies
Elaboration
– Action Plans
Implementation
– Control
– Evaluation
Feedback
Feedback

Considering a Detour....

Many staffs are considering innovative approaches to staff professional development, each designed with the principles of effective adult learning. This type of job embedded learning is often described as "learning by doing, reflecting on the experience, and then generating and sharing new insights and learning with oneself and others" (Sparks, 1999). There are a number of benefits to this kind of professional learning such as, individuals can use to compare their learning with on the job experiences and create their own meaning, the cultural mindsets of experimentation, collaboration and continuous improvement can shape teachers' attitudes and willingness to innovate.

Professional Success Through Professional Growth Practices

Professional growth is a continual process of inquiry which leads to increased expertise in teaching. This benefits both the students and the teaching profession. It can be self-directed or other-directed, and can have collective as well as individual purposes.

Professional Growth Opportunities; Some Examples:

- ▲ professional reading
- ▲ journal writing
- ▲ small group discussion
- ▲ completing an Accreditation course and/or taking classes
- ▲ conducting action research
- ▲ acting as a cooperating teacher with an intern or practice teacher
- ▲ creating a personal professional growth portfolio
- ▲ reviewing lessons using video or audio
- ▲ membership in Special Subject Councils
- ▲ taking an educational leave
- ▲ joining a STF local
- ▲ involvement in curriculum development
- ▲ professional development days
- ▲ team teaching projects
- ▲ collaborative planning
- ▲ peer coaching
- ▲ team teaching projects
- ▲ professional growth plan requirement
- ▲ curriculum networking
- ▲ orientation practices
- ▲ developmental supervision
- ▲ evaluation

Success is realized when teachers adapt and/or affirm their practice as a result of professional growth opportunities.

(Adapted from the STF, 2001)

Professional Growth Opportunities for school based administrators

- SSBA Modules
- SPDU Programs
- The Principal's Short Course - SELU
- SSTA Programs - Leading the Learning Community
- Professional Reading
- Networking
  - On-line
  - With colleagues
- University Classes

Working With Staff

Staff Development – Approaches for Teachers

In the past, professional development focused on individual development, workshops, inservice and external delivery systems. Today the emphasis is on school-based identification of needs, coaching partnerships and team/group development through systematic training and follow up.

As a principal, you can support such innovative professional learning approaches by setting high goals for student and teacher learning, and working with the staff in creating structures which will enable professional practices to take hold.

> *"Because we spend so many of our waking hours at work, most of our development takes place- or doesn't take place- on the job. If our time at work doesn't encourage us and help us to develop our skills, we will never live up to our potential."*
> *(J Kotter, 1996).*

Classroom Researchers

Teachers often use their classrooms as research sites. For example, teachers may test different ways of teaching a concept to determine which had the greatest impact on student learning. Or teachers may experiment to see which process makes for more effective cooperative learning groups among students.

Classroom Visitation

Teachers visit the classrooms of colleagues to view innovative teaching practices and expand and refine their own personal pedagogy. Support for classroom visitations in the form of substitutes provides the time necessary for classroom visitations.

Conferences, Seminars and Symposia

Local, regional and national conferences provide a forum where ideas can be debated, analyzed and sometimes validated. They can inspire, motivate and create feelings of renewal. Some school staffs participate in conferences and seminars as a group and then meet to reflect on what they have learned and how it can influence student learning and classroom practice.

Institutes and Retreats

Summer institutes and retreats provide opportunities for teachers to learn new teaching strategies and techniques or to explore different dimensions of their profession with colleagues.

Mentors and Mentorship

Studies on beginning teachers demonstrate that the first three years of teaching play a crucial role in shaping their perception of the profession and in their decision to stay or leave. Beginning teachers are in greatest need of the training that will enhance their classroom management and instructional skills. They also need support systems that help them see teaching as a collegial, rather than an isolated, endeavor. Mentor teachers can provide the advice, suggestions and constructive feedback that can make the difference between success and failure.

Networks

Effective professional development initiatives make use of a variety of communication networks and strategies. Teachers need to communicate goals and accomplishments, to dialogue and to make group decisions.

Electronic networks can respond to teachers' needs to communicate with a large and more diverse group of educators beyond the staff at their own schools. Open systems can connect teachers to existing on-line libraries, databases and other communication systems.

Partnerships, Consortia and Cooperatives

New partnerships such as consortia and cooperatives are emerging as various organizations discover their interest and ability to share and pool resources. These partnerships often cross traditional lines of demarcation as business, industry and education realize that they have some common interests in professional development.

Peer Coaching

Teachers solicit and receive feedback about their teaching practices after an observation by a peer or other observer. Observation and assessment encourage reflection on teachers' everyday professional lives and can take many forms. Reflective writing and discussion allow teachers to develop ideas that can be integrated.

School Improvement Teams

Changes in school organization and roles within the schools requires rethinking what professional development is, who controls it and when it is conducted. With school-based decision making comes the need for school-based professional development. Decentralized decision making affords the opportunity to explore the talent that resides within the school and allow site-based decision making to be a positive influence.

Study Groups

Study groups are small groups of teachers who meet regularly to work on a predetermined project. This approach to professional development benefits both teachers and administrators by bringing teachers together to undertake a task in a group setting that would normally be done by those teachers and their colleagues in isolation. The optimum size for a study group is about six teachers, with each study group participant sharing equal responsibility for the success of the group.

Commitment to a study group is greatly enhanced when teachers are directly involved in setting the task and its parameters. The study group provides the structure; the participants concentrate on content.

The process for implementing one or more study groups within a school necessitates following a series of steps which are:

1. Define the task.
2. Set regular meeting times and places.
3. Establish appropriate meeting behaviours.
4. Create an action plan.
5. Choose a shared decision-making approach.
6. Contemplate appropriate leadership roles.
7. Promote a climate of shared commitment.
8. Consider logistics of time, space and money.
9. Discuss criteria for achieving/evaluating goals.

Teachers Professional Growth Plans

Teachers develop and carry out a personal plan for professional learning activities such as reading professional journals, trying out new practices in the classroom or joining professional organizations.

Training Trainers

One of the roles of the teacher trainer is to help a group of teachers identify a project that is meaningful to them and then assist in the process of carrying it through – conducting research and workshops, setting priorities and establishing new lines of communication across the staff. Teacher trainers model ways for teachers and administrators to develop and hone their collaborative working skills through group processes such as consensus building, vision building and conflict resolution.

Reprinted with permission from ATA.

Professional Development Keeping the Momentum

- ✓ Make professional development activities a regular part of your staff meeting agenda. Place it first on the agenda, because it is that IMPORTANT.
- ✓ Present professional articles to staff to read prior to the staff meeting with some discussion stems. Discuss the article at the meeting. Throw in a few controversial questions or comments to spark discussion. Often staff do not keep up with new educational research (e.g. terms like constructivist classroom)
- ✓ Choose a focus for the year and relate all professional development activities to this focal point. Clearly demonstrate the connection between the topic and your school's mission and/or vision statement(s). Your focus may even continue for more than one year.
- ✓ Collect specific data and let data drive your professional development activities. Data may come from academic testing, classroom observations, office discipline referrals, surveys, interviews, etc.
- ✓ Visit professional growth plans often. Regular progress checks, assistance with resources, classroom observations, or reporting at staff meetings. Have staff present vignettes of their learning at the end of the year.
- ✓ Make professional reading a part of each teacher's growth plan.
- ✓ When teachers return from a professional conference, have them share one highlight at the most immediate staff meeting.
- ✓ Model: share your own growth plans and professional reading.

Printed with permission from C. Herrick, Principal, Unity Composite School, 2003.

Embedding the School in the Community

Embedding the School in the Community

Introduction 152

Implications Of School$^{\text{PLUS}}$ 153

Communication 155

  Interpersonal Communication 155

  Organizational Communication 156

  Staff Meetings 156

  Dialogue And Discussion 158

  Strengthening Partnerships With Parents And Community 158

  Volunteers In The School 161

  Opportunities For Students 163

Conflict Resolution And Trouble-Shooting 164

Activities For Your School 166

  Before School Opens 166

  Fall 166

  Winter 168

  Spring 169

  Embedding the School in the Community: School Activities at a Glance 170

Resources 171

Travel Kit 172

Embedding the School in the Community

Introduction

The Education Act (1995) Section 175(1) says the principal shall:

- maintain regular liaison with the director with respect to all matters pertaining to the well-being of the school, the staff and the pupils;
- exercise leadership in cooperation with the director and the board of education or the conseil scolaire in the promotion of public involvement in educational planning directed towards the improvement of education in the school and in the school division or the francophone education area.

The Role of the Principal

It is the responsibility of the principal to forge strong relationships with many educational partners in the community and to show leadership in responding to the needs and expectations of the community.

Today's educational context requires the school to be an integral part of local and provincial educational communities.

Principals can build relationships with the community in a variety of ways such as:

- Modeling through assuming leadership roles,
- Providing access to school facilities for community events,
- Developing community through connecting school programs to economic or social needs of the community,
- Inviting community participation in the school.

The principal's knowledge of the school context provides the best position for deciding on the most beneficial ways to involve the school in the community.

Key issues in improving school community relations are effective communication with all partners, trouble-shooting and conflict resolution.

School Division Policy

While considering the relationship between the community and your school, refer to school division policy to remind yourself how it deals with the subject. Write down any words you would like to remember in the box provided.

Policies and Practices from my School Division

-
-
-
-

Implications of School$^{\text{PLUS}}$

A Saskatchewan Learning document, *Securing Saskatchewan's Future; Ensuring the Wellbeing and Educational Success of Saskatchewan's Children and Youth*, 2002, is a concept that views the school as being at the heart of a wide variety of organizations and supports that serve children and their families. It is the principal's responsibility to forge and maintain productive relationships among the school, the community and these other organizations. Calls for greater accountability in education lead to a principal being required to respond to a number of diverse partners in balanced ways consistent with legislation, division policy, administrative directives, and needs of children.

Recommendation 1.3 of the Role of the School Report 2001, requires that:

> *All educational stakeholder organizations do everything within their power to promote an approach to leadership and school administration that is consistent with a Community School Philosophy.*

Consider these questions as you work towards the implementation of the Community School philosophy in the school.

- *In what ways do I seek to be collaborative rather than adversarial?*
- *How might I promote the development of staff, rather than merely exercise control?*
- *In what ways do I share power and show that I value teamwork?*
- *How might I improve my negotiating and mediation skills?*
- *In what ways do I seek to find the common ground when resolving conflict?*
- *In what ways might I help improve morale and organizational climate?*
- *How might I meaningfully involve students in the improvement of our programs?*
- *In what ways do I show that I value parents as partners in the education of children?*
- *How might I view the community as a resource, and seek ways to incorporate these resources in the life of the school?*

Role of the School: Final Report (2001)

In Saskatchewan, a key element of Adaptive Leadership is: Building Capacity for a Learning Community

- A learning community is one that promotes and values individual and collective learning for all members of the community.
- The school accesses community expertise and resources to enrich the learning program for all students.
- The school is used beyond the traditional school day to offer learning opportunities that meet the expressed needs and interests of community members.
- The school supports the delivery of a range of school related/linked services for children, youth and their families.
- Leaders find effective ways to include all members of the learning community in making decisions or planning programs.
- Leaders foster a climate that promotes reflection and collaboration.
- Leaders develop an organizational structure that promotes understanding and builds trust through open discussion and dialogue.

Sask. Learning, 2003

Communication

As previously discussed communication is key to good community school relations. Consider the following aspects of effective communication:

- What to communicate, how and to whom.
- Ground Rules – develop common understanding about what is discussed and where.
- Be aware of the purposes of effective communication.
- Consider how you communicate with other groups.
- Be conscious of the way you communicate with others.
- Be conscious of your own self-talk.

Questions to consider

- *What are my beliefs about communication?*
- *How do I view my role as a communicator in the school?*
- *What is expected of me as a communicator in the school community?*
- *In what ways do I communicate with people at school?*
- *What are my strengths as a communicator?*

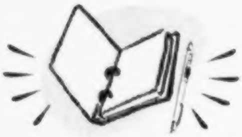
Interpersonal Communication

Listening is at the heart of good communication. Be aware of those behaviours that get in the way. These are behaviours that divert your attention away from the speaker and back to yourself, the listener. While there are many good sources of information regarding communications skills, the cognitive coaching literature speaks of a number of practical, respectful strategies for improving communication skills.

Remember: Listening is all about the speaker!

Resources to Remember

Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools. Costa and Garmston (2002).



Why Paraphrase?

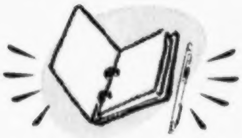
- To encourage reflection
- To strive for clarity for both speaker and listener
- To show that you are trying to understand
- To give the speaker time to think
- To give permission to probe
- To support the speaker in summarizing or organizing thinking
- To support the speaker in thinking at higher logical levels

Organizational Communication

As well as communicating with individuals, it is important to establish effective communication within the school community. Meetings are one way of communicating within an organization and productive use of staff meeting time is important.

Personal Reflection

- *How effective is the communication within our school and community?*
- *With whom do we need to communicate outside of the school building?*



Organizational Communication Checkpoints

- Weekly newsletter to staff
- Staff room monthly/ quarterly calendar
- Weekly S.I.S. meeting (Staff Info Sharing)
- Food and laughter

Possible Purposes for Having a Meeting:

- To receive or give information.
- To define, analyze, or solve a problem.
- To reconcile a conflict.
- To make a decision.
- To express feelings.

The Importance of Productive Meetings

School communities are full of busy people with many ways to spend their time. Ensuring that staff meetings are a productive use of time is an important consideration.

Questions to ask when deciding to hold a meeting:

- What do I want to accomplish at this meeting?
- Is a meeting the best avenue to take?
- What other values are there in meeting, i.e. teambuilding, belonging?
- In what ways do I attend to and honour the learning preferences of the staff?

Staff Meetings

Collegial approaches can improve the effectiveness of staff meetings. Collaborative approaches honour the expertise in the group and mobilize diverse resources for solving problems.

If enhanced collaboration is a goal, consider:

- As a group establishing ground rules or guidelines for the meeting.
- Rotating the chair and recorder.
- Including open agenda items for airing diverse opinions.
- Using collaborative decision making to identify common ground.
- Distributing reflective, action-oriented minutes quickly.
- Setting definite time limits for items.

Honour the learning preferences of the participants by:

- Setting a welcoming atmosphere with soft, enjoyable music.
- Distributing material or questions that require input prior to the meeting so that all have time to consider and frame their responses.
- Using flip charts to capture ideas visually for the visual learner.
- Trying consensus-based decision making such as Dynamic Harmonization (Hudson, 1996).
- Inviting staff to "walk and talk" about their thoughts on an issue or topic.
- Inviting staff to read current research related to a topic and set a jigsaw to discuss.
- Using a "structured controversy" format for those "intense issues".

"The agenda for staff meetings at our school goes by staff member names in alphabetical order. When it is your turn, you can bring forward anything you want – questions, issues, information, reports on committee activities, reports on local association or STF business. The agenda "rolls" – names bump down one place at each meeting. This way no one is always first/last. We also take turns as chair and secretary. As principal, I bring forward my report when my name comes up."

Role of Staff in Meetings

Staff meetings are not the sole responsibility of the principal. Inviting all staff members to take leadership roles and to contribute positively is an important consideration. Building community requires that all have responsibility in decisions.

Typical Staff Meeting Agenda:

1. Transition activity
2. Celebrations
3. Professional Development component
4. Decision items
5. Discussion items
6. Information items

Dialogue and Discussion

In the course of meetings items arise that need to be dealt with. Consider the difference between discussion and dialogue as you work at including all points of view.

Dialogue

- leads to collective meaning making
- leads to shared understanding
- leads to emotional safety
- connects people to underlying motivations and mental models

Discussion

- leads to decisions that serve the group's vision, values and goals
- leads to decisions that stay made
- displays rigorous critical thinking, mutual respect, weighing of options

Garmston and Wellman (1998)

Make a conscious decision as a group during meetings about which approach (dialogue or discussion) will be used when dealing with particular issues.

"Have fun at staff meetings. I brought in yo-yos and asked how is a yo-yo like teaching? Find ways to celebrate even the smallest successes. Have water conflicts in June. Bring a set of dry clothes and sometimes a third set!"

Strengthening Partnerships with Parents and Community

Whether you are in an urban or rural setting, you will be working with parent representative groups of one kind or another. In Saskatchewan, legislation requires election of boards of trustees or school districts (in rural school divisions larger than 1295 square kilometers) and provides for establishment of elected or appointed school advisory committees in urban school division.

The basic roles and responsibilities of Local School Board, School/Parent Advisory Council are prescribed in legislation (Education Act, 1995, Section 134 – District Boards of Trustees, Section 135 and 140 – Local School Advisory Committees). As the role and relationship is further defined by each board of education, there may be significant differences from one school division to the next. Developing effective partnerships with parents and community through Division Board members, Local School Board members, School/Parent Advisory Council members is in everyone's best interests.

Attention!

Principals have found these resources to be very helpful!

School Councils - the Saskatchewan Vision!

Strengthening the Parent - Community - School Partnership.

Both are available from SSTA.

The Final Report of the Saskatchewan Task Force on Educational Governance (1993) provides helpful background on the topic of school level governance. Families want to have a say in the education their children receive. They are concerned about overall policies, but also about the day-to-day details of their child's educational experience. Taxpayers, too, want to have input. Many taxpayers are concerned about both educational quality and about the level of local taxation. Presently, at the division level, citizens have input to educational governance through boards of education. At the local level, they have input through district boards in rural areas and local school advisory committees in urban areas.

The process used to elect members of district boards differs from the process used to determine members of local school advisory committees. Members of district boards are elected by the public. There is no systematic process for determining members of local school advisory committees. In some places they are selected by the principal, in others elected by a body such as the Home & School Association, or elected at an annual meeting.

The issue of local control is made more complicated by the existence of local school advisory committees in urban areas. Local school advisory committees do not exactly parallel district boards. The members of school advisory committees are appointed/ elected through a different process. In urban areas, there is provision for one local school advisory committee for each school. In rural areas, there may be more than one school with the boundaries of a district board. Moreover, the responsibilities of the advisory committee vary from one school to another. It depends very much on board of education policy, the views of the school principal, and the interests and assertiveness of the members of the local school advisory committee.

While the administrative accountability link from principal to the employer is clearly defined, the relationship to Division Boards and Local School and or School/Parent Advisory Councils, parents and the broader community often needs to be clarified and developed within a local political context. School principals may wish to initiate discussions with their educational partners in order to develop, foster and enhance successful partnerships.

How is your team doing?

Things To Consider When Establishing Relationships

With Local Boards/School Advisory Councils/Parent Advisory Councils.

1. Know your role and responsibilities with respect to these partners and make sure you understand their roles and responsibilities with respect to you and the school.
2. Look for opportunities to learn about those roles and responsibilities.
3. Have a clear idea of the channels of communication. This is a proactive way of avoiding anyone overstepping the bounds of their area of responsibility.
4. Protocols for communication exist in all school systems. Be sure that you know what they are and that you inform staff and parents of the appropriate protocols. Your best communication is the everyday contact with students.

"Get to know the members of your local board. I operate from a premise that they're there because they are interested in education and they want good things for kids."

Meeting with the Local Boards/School Advisory Councils/Parent Advisory Councils

- Contact the chair and schedule times and locations for regular meetings e.g., the fourth Monday of each month.
- Let it be known to the chair that you are also available to meet on an informal basis.
- Prepare for the initial meeting of the year by creating a "stump speech". See "Developing Vision and Direction."
- Prepare written reports for scheduled meetings. Include items such as staffing, enrolments, upcoming events, issues and requests for support.

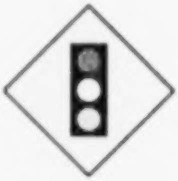
The Importance of Communication – A School Trustee's Story

"Local boards must be engaged in the policy development and visioning for the school. They need to be informed about the good things that are happening at the school and they need to be made aware of any problems that are happening. They need to feel confident that conflicts are being dealt with according to policy.

They also need to be made aware of the internal school policy and guidelines around discipline and when possible they should be involved in the development of those policies and guidelines. The administration of policies must be left to Administrators. The local board must have trust and confidence in the principal that he/she is following through with the resolution of problems. This trust is built through open communication. The local boards need to be kept informed as to decisions made."

Volunteers in the School

F.A.Q. **"How do I ensure that parents have an active/supportive role in the school?"**



Consider:
Involvement of parents in schools is key to student success. Parents may consider volunteering in the school as an opportunity to help build a positive school climate and to observe their child(ren) in the school environment. Understanding why parents volunteer will help in-school administrators develop suitable opportunities for parents who are willing and able to assist in school.

Opportunities for parents to become active in their child's school may include:

- Preparing, delivering breakfast, snack, hot meal programs.
- Listening to children read, helping individual students.
- Helping with school enhancement projects – playground improvement, planting flower beds, gardens, painting murals.
- Assisting with school functions – concerts, track and field, environmental trips.

Organization and Planning: Parent Volunteers

- Helping in classrooms with art projects, presentations, class parties.
- Helping to raise funds for sport, music and cultural programs.

Opportunities for Students

Principals spend considerable time and resources in creating opportunities for students to learn from the greater community. The following is a list of resources that the school may find useful when searching out opportunities for students and schools.

Consider this a "working" list. While extensive, it is not intended to limit the search for speakers, presenters, teachers and entertainers that may be available and appropriate for the setting you are in. The list is provincial in that these are organizations that can be available to any school in the province. This list was compiled by principals and teachers from all over the province who have worked with these organizations.

Sports

- Hockey/Sports Teams, e.g. Regina Pats, Tisdale Hawks
- Provincial Sport Governing Bodies – offer workshops, camps, and sometimes equipment for just about any sport your students may be interested in, e.g. tennis, soccer, athletics. Contact Sask Sport Inc at 306-780-9200 and ask to be connected to a specific sport
- Saskatchewan Roughriders

Cultural

- 25th Street Theatre
- Globe Theatre
- Learning Through the Arts
- MacKenzie Outreach Program
- Misoula Theatre
- OSAC
- Persephone Theatre
- Saskatchewan Cultural Exchange Society
- Saskatchewan Express
- Saskatoon Symphony, Regina Symphony

Other

- Ambulance/Paramedics
- Fire Department – local
- Gideons

- Green Kids
- Guiding Organization/Scouts
- Land/Sea/Air Cadets
- Motivational Media
- Police – City, Municipal, RCMP
- Public Health
- Public Library
- Royal Canadian Legion
- Sask Power – Share The Warmth
- Sask Tel Pioneers
- Shriners
- Teen Aide
- Wheelchair Association

Conflict Resolution and Trouble-Shooting

The nature of school community relations is such that conflicts or problems may arise. Working to prevent such problems through communication of school vision, mission, practices and policies is part of the principal's role. The principal must also deal with issues that do arise and in fact may serve as mediator.

Mediation training is available from Saskatchewan Justice and from Mediation Services in Regina (306-787-5747).

"Mediation training is invaluable when attempting to resolve issues between and among students, parents, and staff."

The following is ***one process*** for conflict resolution:

Step One – Air Grievances

- Allow participants to "unload" facilitating a more calm and rational approach to solutions.
- Allow participants to speak one at a time without interruption.
- Ask participants to summarize each other's position using paraphrasing and acknowledging feelings.

Step Two – Define the Issue

- Ask each participant to define in one sentence the issue causing the conflict. Each must agree on the definition.
- Write down the sentence agreed upon.
- Do not proceed until the participants agree on the conflict to be resolved.
- If multiple issues surface, write them all down but work on only one at a time.

Step Three – Brainstorm Solutions

- Ask each participant to suggest as many solutions as possible.
- Accept all suggested solutions at this stage regardless of how far-fetched they seem.

Step Four – Agree on a Solution

- Ask participants to identify those solutions which are unacceptable.

- Draw a line through those unacceptable solutions once they have been adequately justified.
- Continue this process until one solution is agreed upon.
- Remain impartial as the mediator.

Step Five – Monitor Progress of the Solution

- Ask participants to set a meeting time within two weeks to revisit the solution.
- If the solution is not working, repeat the process.
- If one party has not kept the agreement or does not wish to go on, then discontinue the mediation process.
- Conflict resolution works only when participants sincerely want to resolve the issue.

Lehr (1994)

"If you find yourself really upset over a particular situation, practice the 24-48 rule. Wait for 24 hours before responding but be sure to respond within 48 hours before other concerns get in the way."

Activities For Your School

Before School Opens

Meet with Leaders in the Community

"When I came here the first thing I did was to go and introduce myself to the town administrator and to the RCMP so that I got to know them, they got to know me and it's paid off dividends. I have a very good working relationship with the mayor and council so there's a lot of things that we're doing here collaboratively with the town because of that relationship."

Plan Parent/Staff Orientation (Meet The Teacher) Night, Open House or Welcome Week. Hold this function early in the school year. Consult with parents in the farming sectors to determine the best time. Be aware there may not be a best time!

Fall

Newsletters

Develop the **school newsletter**. The school newsletter can be an effective way to communicate the achievements, plans and activities of the school. Newsletters can be a lot of work so you want to make sure they are an effective communication tool. Consider the following:

- Establish a masthead (logo and name which are placed at the top of the first page). Make the masthead simple, clean and distinctive.
- Establish a standard format for the newsletter using two or three columns and a standard font and font size.
- Pictures are great if you have great technology. Do not use space for grainy, unclear pictures. All pictures need a byline. Credit the photographer.
- Consider a standard format consisting of Principal's Message, Committee Reports, Current Events List or Calendar, Classroom or Grade Reports, Sports Report, etc.
- Also consider guest columnists: Health workers (ie. Dental Health Nurse, Nutritionist, Community Health Coordinator, Speech Language Pathologist), message from Division Board Member and/or Local Board/School/Parent Advisory Council.
- Student work – stories, poems, art work. Some schools dedicate one page each newsletter to a class. The class designs the page.

- If possible put your newsletter on-line. Deliver copies to businesses in the community that agree to distribute your newsletter (ie. coffee shop, grocery store, drug store). Make additional copies for all members of the Division Board, Local Board, School/Parent Advisory Council and other schools in your system.
- Set up a system in your school for editing the newsletter. Have at least two people read it before publishing.

Plan **Education Week.** Preferably the Education Week Planning Committee would be established shortly after the theme is released from Saskatchewan Learning (usually February or March). Committee should fine tune plans. Ensure that at some point the community is invited to the school or the students go out into the community.

Plan for **Remembrance Day** observance. If your school participates in Remembrance Day activities, this can be a meaningful learning opportunity for your students and a way to connect with Veterans and the Sons and Daughters of Veterans. Consider inviting Veterans and/or Legion members to your school. Encourage them to bring war memorabilia. Participate in the Canadian Legion poster, essay and poem competitions. Collect poppy money.

Plan **Product Week**. Work with local t-shirt company to produce school t-shirts and sweats. Use your school logo, mascot, art work. Keep it simple. Moms like grey sweats!

Connect with Health or Fitness community for **International Walk To School Day.**

Prepare report for **Local Board and or School/Parent Advisory Council meeting**. Assist with planning Annual General Meeting. This can be an opportunity to talk to the parents and public about your school.

Plan **year's activities** that will include the community. Consider working with Local Board/School Advisory Council/Parent Advisory Council to sponsor these activities which may include:

- Dinners
- Concerts
- Breakfasts
- Terry Fox Run
- Thanksgiving Banquet
- Carnival, Fun Night

***Pick* one special group** in the community to focus on for the year. This would involve each grade or class finding ways to connect with this special group. Examples may include:

- Grandparents
- Chamber of Commerce
- Charity such as the hospital, food bank
- Preschool children

Encourage the community to **use the school** as a classroom. Make sure this meets with board policy.

"Be visible. Go to ball games, birthday parties and community events. Then the students and parents will know you want to be a part of their world."

Winter

Investigate school division plans for **Career Day**. Check with your school division to see what plans are made for this activity. Consider having students go out into the community as well as inviting representatives from different careers to come into the school for presentations, discussions, displays.

***Plan* Brown Bag Lunch Seminar Series**. Consider connecting with health and education to bring noon hour information sessions to parents and interested community members. Bring in guest speakers from the community to present on a variety of topics which may include:

- How to teach my child to read
- Math Manipulatives – what are they and what do I do with them?
- Preparing nutritious noon lunches

***Schedule* Concert and/or Cultural** events.

Plan for annual Christmas or Winter Concert. Book facility and sound system if needed.

Nominate staff, students, parents for **awards**. This would be fun to do during Staff Appreciation Week held each February.

Spring

Participate in the annual area **Music and/or Drama Festival**. Encourage participation from as many classrooms as possible. Contact Local Board or School/Parent Advisory Council for help in paying entry fees. Consider hosting Music Festival sessions at your school so students can attend.

Plan **retirement functions** for any superannuating teachers. Plan retirement functions and farewell parties for other staff. Report to Local Board and or School/Parent Advisory Council on any retirements and ask for their help in planning functions.

Send **thank you cards** to community groups and members for supporting the school during the last year. Do this for specific activities in which they helped the school.

Sponsor a **Volunteer Recognition Event**. Invite local businesses to donate draw prizes.

Encourage **parent supervisors** for school environmental trips.

Enlist the support of parents and interested community members in helping at the **track and field meet, hi/low meet, or play day.**

Embedding the School in the Community: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Opens

- ✓ Meet with community leaders
  - . business
  - . civic
  - . cultural
- ✓ Plan school/community orientation week

Fall

- ✓ Design school newsletter
- ✓ Plan Education Week activities
- ✓ Plan Remembrance Day
- ✓ Plan Product Week
- ✓ Prepare for and meet with local board and/or school advisory council
- ✓ Plan calendar of community events
- ✓ Select a community charity
- ✓ Invite the community to breakfast
- ✓ Encourage staff to be involved in community events

Winter

- ✓ Organize Career Expo
- ✓ Plan "brown bag lunch and learning" schedule
- ✓ Schedule and plan holiday celebrations
- ✓ Celebrate Staff Appreciation Week

Spring

- ✓ Participate in festivals – let the community know!
- ✓ Celebrate the school's participation
- ✓ Plan superannuation and retirement functions
- ✓ Thank volunteers and community groups
- ✓ Make use of parent volunteers for student field trips and track meets
- ✓ Have a year-end school community picnic

Resources

Costa, A.J. & Garmston, R.J. (2002). *Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Dyer, J. (2000). *Outrageous Pursuits: 40, 50, 100 Many, Many Ways to Enhance A Positive Learning Environment.* Calgary, AB: HeadSmart, Inc.

Garmston, R., Wellman, B. (1998). "Teacher Talk That Makes A Difference". *Educational Leadership,* April, 30-34.

Hudson, J. (1996). Doctoral Dissertation.

Lehr, J.B. (1994). *Schools Without Fear: Group Activities for Building Communities.* Minneapolis, MN: Minnesota Educational Media Corporation.

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. *Building Partnerships With Parents And Community – School Councils: The Saskatchewan Vision.* www.ssta.sk.ca/research/governance/96-13.htm

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. *Partnerships With Community.* www.ssta.sk.ca/research/parent involvement/parent involvement.htm

School$^{\text{PLUS}}$: A Vision For Children and Youth: Toward A New School Community and Human Service Partnership In Saskatchewan: Final Report To The Minister of Education, Government of Saskatchewan. (2001). Regina, SK: Task Force and Public Dialogue on the Role of the School.

Stephanson, S. (1994). *School Based Planning: Talking and Growing Together.* Brampton, ON: School Success Consulting.

Embedding the School in the Community

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Embedding the School in the Community

2. How is Your Team Doing?

3. Looking at our Team

4. Communications and Public Relations
   - Staff
   - Newsletters
   - Central Office/School Board

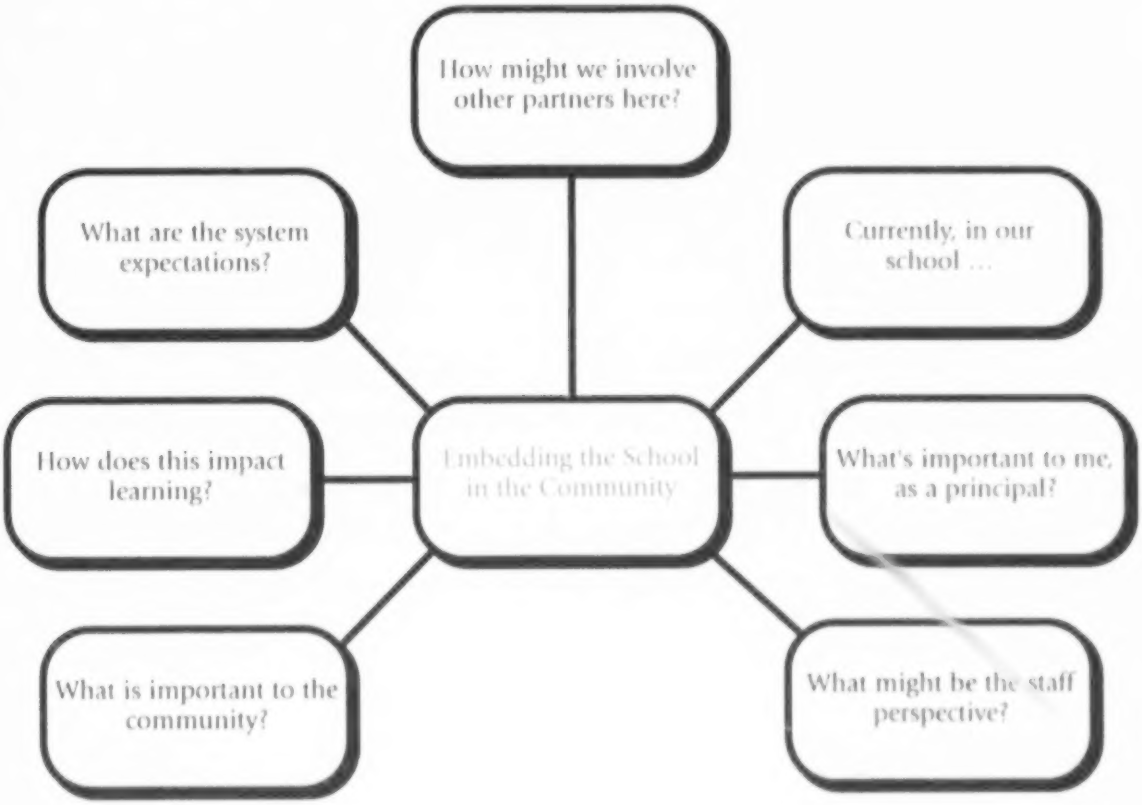
5. Organization and Planning – Parent Volunteers

Flexibility: Embedding the School in the Community

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Embedding the School in the Community.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school …
How does this impact learning?
Embedding the School in the Community
What's important to me, as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Embedding the School in the Community

How Is Your Team Doing?

Most people have had the opportunity at some time in their life to be a part of a successful team or community. Successful teams achieve their goals and develop a strong sense of belonging in the process. Effective organizations also develop teams that work together for a common purpose with explicit goals and shared rewards. Successful teams demonstrate competence, confidence, accountability and celebration.

If you have experienced working with a dysfunctional team or an organization that is stuck – you know the sense of futility and frustration. Your role as a team builder is to support your school as an effective learning community.

How would you describe your team?

Teamwork is the ability to direct individual accomplishment toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results. The basic idea of teamwork is key to your success.

Never Always	Read the statement and circle the number reflecting your team's on-the-job-behavior. Compare your responses and discuss.
1 2 3 4	We have a clear purpose and goal.
1 2 3 4	We understand and follow our team's shared values.
1 2 3 4	Our meetings are effective.
1 2 3 4	Decision making is consensual without being unduly aggressive or passive.
1 2 3 4	We resolve conflict clearly and regard it as necessary for team growth.
1 2 3 4	We regularly seek feedback from others on our performance.
1 2 3 4	We celebrate and reward our accomplishments.
	Total Score

Looking at Our Team

Who is on our team?

-
-
-
-

Successful teams share the following characteristics:

- A commitment to a common goal
- Representative membership
- A constructive climate
- Clearly defined roles
- Effective procedures
- Team players
- Positive inter-group relations
- Shared leadership
- Results oriented
- Creative problem solving
- On-going assessment

Team goals that really motivate are:

- Compelling
- Held in common
- Measurably attainable

Strengthening the Parent-Community School Partnership, Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

Communications and Public Relations

Staff

Staff refers to all professional and support staff working in and for the school.

Why Communicate With Staff?

All staff need to be aware of what is happening to maintain morale, to share the news with parents and in the community, and to feel important. Staff can be the strongest promoters of your school in the community. Both professional and support staff are vital to the operation of the school and must therefore be informed about all upcoming events and issues. Communication should be a two-way process whenever possible.

How to Communicate With Staff

Communicate with staff by:

- ✓ Face-to-face contact when possible.
- ✓ Notes on a staff board where people know to check for information.
- ✓ Personal notes recognizing hard work.
- ✓ Weekly memos.
- ✓ Well run staff meetings where everyone is involved for relevant portions.
- ✓ Put public relations on the staff meeting agenda several times each year.

Reprinted with permission from ATA.

Communications and Public Relations

Newsletters

School newsletters are an excellent communication tool that can be targeted at parents and other community members.

Why Encourage School Newsletters?

We need to communicate with parents so that they are aware of and understand what is happening in their child's school. If parents don't understand or are kept in the dark, it is unreasonable to expect their support for school goals and objectives. Many parents do not come to school. If they do not visit the school or attend school events, you will need to use another method of communication. A school newsletter is one example of communication.

A newsletter is an excellent way of communicating with taxpayers in your community who do not have children in school. You may want to consider the distribution of appropriate newsletters to members beyond your parent group.

The Audience for the Newsletter

Parents newsletters

- ✓ A successful newseltter provides readers with timely and relevant information. Keep information timely!
- ✓ More is not necessarily better – everyone today seems to be bombarded with so many pieces of print material.
- ✓ When reviewing articles for your newsletter, ask the question "What is the purpose of the newsletter?"
- ✓ Create a schedule for your newsletter and keep to it.
- ✓ Occasionally evaluate your newsletter through a readership survey.
- ✓ Write, re-write and proofread. For parents who don't come to the school, the newsletter may be the only link. How it looks and the content in it will say a lot about your school.

Community Newsletters

- ✓ Much of what was said about parent newsletters goes for the publishing of a community newsletter.
- ✓ A one-pager with good news stories might be distributed through community locations such as doctors' offices, community centres or other high-traffic places.
- ✓ If appropriate, one of your parent newsletters (or a portion of it) might be distributed in the community.
- ✓ Special notices for school events that are open to the public could also be advertised through this distribution method.
- ✓ Keep your school visible in the community.
- ✓ Consider electronically distributing your newsletter or linking your school website with community websites.

Communications and Public Relations

Central Office/School Board

Central office staff includes the director and/or superintendent and all others who work at the school board office as well as the school division's elected board of trustees.

Two-way communication with your division's central office and school board is important for smooth operations within a school. As well as responding to requests from central administration, there will be appropriate opportunities to invite administration and trustees to events at your school. Visits should be arranged for touring the school as well as for meeting with school staff, school council members or with parent groups. Keep an open door policy and invite trustees to stop by the school or call at any time. If you do not hear from trustees, you may want to be the initiator of the conversation.

Communicate with central office and the school board by:

- ✓ Sending administrators and trustees a copy of your school newsletter,
- ✓ Inviting them to all major school events,
- ✓ Getting them involved in a meaningful way in school events, or
- ✓ Occasionally calling to share some good news about students, staff or the school.

Reprinted with permission from the ATA.

Organization and Planning

Parent Volunteers

Busy Work Doesn't Help

While having a school full of parent volunteers may be the politically correct thing to do in the '90s, participation will quickly fizzle if parents don't find their work fulfilling.

The following guidelines outline criteria for meaningful parent involvement. However, any volunteer program needs built-in reality checks. Ask parents often, both through informal discussions and formal surveys, if the work they do in your school is meaningful.

Pseudo vs Meaningful Involvement

Pseudo	**Meaningful**
• Is driven by political motives	• Is driven by educational motives
• Is directed at school or teacher needs	• Is directed at the child's needs
• Assumes that home and school are independent	• Assumes home and school are interdependent
• Assumes parents already know enough about the school and teachers already know enough about the home	• Assumes parents need to be educated about the school and teachers need to be educated about the home
• Is viewed as a means of maintaining the status quo, reducing conflict	• Is viewed as an important vehicle for school improvement
• Is based upon brief, ritualized, impersonal communication	• Is based upon sustained and free communication

The Volunteer's Role

While the teacher is the decision-maker within the classroom, increasingly parents are needed to participate as leaders in school advisory and the following kinds of decision-making roles:

- Working as a team member, providing input into the educational program. For instance, parent committees working with teachers and administration can develop strategies for enhancing learning in science and mathematics.
- Assisting in setting goals for the school. Volunteer committees can work with teachers and administration in assessing needs, setting priorities and establishing short- and long-range goals.
- Assuming a leadership role within the organization. School leadership doesn't rest just with school administration. The type of volunteer leadership that builds parks, nursing homes, food banks, and recreation programs is also needed in schools.
- Assisting in initiating, developing, implementing and evaluating parent programs. When parents assume leadership, teachers and administrator have more time to spend on instructional needs.

Teachers Can…(25 ways – out of one million – to keep good volunteers)

1. Smile.
2. Greet volunteers by name.
3. Take time to talk to volunteers and explain what you wish them to do.
4. Provide good pre-service training.
5. Give volunteers choices.
6. Invite volunteers into the staff room.
7. Call or write a note if the volunteer is away.

8. Include volunteers in staff meetings when appropriate.

9. Use the volunteer's special interests and talents.

10. Share articles or books.

11. Encourage students to share positive comments with volunteers.

12. Include volunteers in professional development days when appropriate.

13. Ask for help from volunteers when you know they have training or an interest in a specific area.

14. Mail a letter of thanks recognizing the contribution of each volunteer.

15. Invite an experienced volunteer to train a new volunteer.

16. Plan staff and volunteer social events.

17. Put up a volunteer suggestion box.

18. Provide scholarships or money so that volunteers can attend workshops and conferences.

19. Recognize volunteers in the school newsletter.

20. Notify the news media of newsworthy volunteer efforts.

21. Say thank you.

22. Periodically check to see if volunteers are still happy doing their present job or want a new challenge.

23. Write a letter of recommendation at the completion of their term.

24. Plan a yearly celebration for volunteers.

25. Take time to let your volunteers know how their contribution has helped student learning.

Your Volunteer Program is Successful When...

- Volunteers and staff respect and appreciate each other's roles.
- Volunteers and staff communicate openly.
- Volunteers are reliable, enthusiastic, dependable, cooperative and open-minded.
- The volunteer coordinator
  - Has good communication skills,
  - Has good telephone manners,
  - Is organized and able to delegate,
  - Has good listening skills,
  - Has a positive sense of humor, and
  - Is flexible.
- The volunteer coordinator communicates regularly with the school principal on all aspects of the volunteer program.
- The volunteer coordinator communicates regularly with volunteers, keeps them informed, listens to ideas and deals with any emerging problems.
- Volunteers respect confidential matters.
- Staff continually provide new and meaningful opportunities for volunteers.
- Students respect volunteers and their job.
- Parents are aware of volunteer opportunities and of how to get involved.
- New volunteers are introduced to the school and staff and made to feel welcome.
- An up-to-date volunteer handbook is provided to all volunteers.
- Volunteers complete a registration form, which is used as a guide for placement.
- Orientation and training sessions are organized for the volunteers. The principal and staff are closely involved.
- Staff have discussed and understand the role of volunteers.

Reprinted with permission from *A Reference Guide for School Administrators,* Alberta Teaachers' Association

Developing an Effective School Team

Developing an Effective School Team

Introduction 186

Collaborative Culture And Community Schools 188

- Images Of Team 188
- Team Building 188
- Four Hats of Shared Leadership 189
- Staff Meetings And Team Building 190
- The School Team 191
- Supervision Of School Team Members 191
- Supervision And Professionalism 192
- The Principal's Own Professional Growth 192

Activities For Your School 193

- Before School Opens 193
- Fall 193
- Winter 194
- Spring 195
- Developing an Effective School Team: School Activities At A Glance 196

Resources 197

Travel Kit 198

Developing an Effective School Team

Introduction

***The Education Act, 1995*, Section 175(1) says the principal shall:**

Exercise general supervision over the work of:

- All members of his or her staff and;
- Other employees of the board of education or the conseil scolaire whose duties relate directly to the care and maintenance of the school building and its facilities.

The Role of the Principal

As the "community school" approach to education becomes more prevalent in Saskatchewan, principals are devoting more time and energy to collaboration with a variety of agencies providing services to children and families. In this collaboration, principals are challenged to maintain the instructional focus of the school, coordinate the efforts of various personnel working with students, and meld a diverse staff into a strong, effective school team.

An essential part of the in-school administrator's role is developing and integrating all school personnel into an effective school team. In this capacity principals act in a dual role both as a member of the school team and as an agent for the employing board of education.

Some responsibilities of this dimension include:

- Supervision of performance of teachers and other personnel according to school division policy.
- Provision of professional development opportunities for staff.
- Maintenance of high staff morale.

School Division Policy

While considering ways of strengthening the team at your school, refer to school division policy. A box is provided for recording ideas and policies you want to remember.

Resources to Remember

- *Outrageous Pursuits*, Dyer (2000)
- *The Pfeiffer Book of Successful Team-building Tools*, Biech (2001)
- SSTA, "Principals for our Changing Schools", Module 14.
- *Shaping School Culture Fieldbook*, Peterson and Deal (2002)
- *Uncovering the Stones: Addressing Issues of Equity in the Staffroom*, STF (2002)

Policies and Practices from my School Division

-
-
-
-

In Saskatchewan a key element of Adaptive Leadership is: Developing a Culture of Equity.

- A culture of equity is one that respects the individual, promotes learning at the highest possible level, values every person and promotes a safe environment.
- Equity recognizes the value of differences and acknowledges that not everyone benefits equally from being offered the same opportunities.
- Engaging the staff, students, parent, community members and other human service providers in developing a culture of equity is a key leadership task.

Sask. Learning, 2003

Seven Commitments to Team Building

- Unconditional trust and acceptance
- Time together
- Honest communication
- Effort and hard work
- Mutual growth
- Conflict resolution – not if, but when
- Forgiveness

(Stephanson, 1994)

Successful teams exhibit the following characteristics:

- Participative leadership
- Positive atmosphere
- Cooperative relationships
- Balanced participation
- Valued diversity
- Managed conflict
- Clear goals
- Open and clear communication
- Effective decision making

(Biech, 2001)

Collaborative Culture and Community Schools

The challenge for the principal within the community school framework is two-fold. Principals may take a leadership role in the creation of school and interagency teams. Supporting teams that are already in operation is another part of the challenge. High performing teams require a collaborative culture within which to work.

Images of Team

The principal's position as a member of the school team is one of a delicate balance between colleague and agent of the employing board of education. The word "team" can imply any number of images for people.

What Does Your Team Look Like?

- What picture comes to mind for you when you think of a "team"? What is your metaphor for "team"?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of your image of team?
- In what situations might you envision needing a team like the one you imagine?
- How is a team like an orchestra?
- How is a team like a jazz combo?
- How is your image of team like a soccer or baseball team?
- In which situations might you envision needing or using each of these models of team?

Team Building

Building an effective team is one of the responsibilities of the principal. There are many resources that speak to techniques that principals might use to carry out effective team building. As well, there are some things to know that will help in the team-building process.

Four Hats of Shared Leadership

Garmston (1999) sees leadership as a shared function when working with staffs. He suggests that an important leadership function is to develop the skill of choosing a leadership stance, or "hat", to wear in any interaction: coaching, consulting, facilitating, or presenting. In his work with adaptive schools, Garmston (1999) stresses the importance of both administrators and staff members knowing when and how to change hats.

Coaching and consulting are support functions which can be applied in an individual or group setting. As a coach, you are non-judgmental and you "walk beside" and support the group with their understanding of an issue or situation. As a consultant, you can respond to individual or group questions, provide information or offer advice based on your expertise with content or process.

When working with a team, the leader can wear the facilitating hat by facilitating group processes which help focus the group, work through conflict or adapt to change, as examples. A facilitator makes things and processes easier for the group. Finally, as leader, you may choose to wear the presenting hat when you want to extend and enrich the group's knowledge, skill or attitude. The presenter is often a teacher with expertise.

As well, as an effective leader in a school, you can encourage all team members to wear all hats in order to develop self-understanding as a member of the staff.

Staff Members Who Might Act As:

Facilitators:

- ________________
- ________________
- ________________
- ________________

Coaches:

- ________________
- ________________
- ________________
- ________________

Presenters:

- ________________
- ________________
- ________________
- ________________

Consultants:

- ________________
- ________________
- ________________

Staff Meetings and Team Building

School communities are full of busy people with many ways to spend their time. The staff meeting may be the only time when all the staff in the building are in the same room together. This is an ideal opportunity for team building as well as conducting the business of the school. Ensuring that staff meetings meet the needs of both the group and the individuals is important. Consider the following:

- What do we want to accomplish with this meeting?
- Is a meeting the best avenue to take?
- What other reasons are there to have a meeting?
- Teambuilding
- Information sharing
- Collaborations and learning

There are many approaches to staff meetings. Some may be derived from the business world. Collegial approaches, encouraged in the world of education, can improve the effectiveness of staff meetings by honouring the expertise and diverse resources in the group. In working toward a collaborative style consider:

- As a group establish ground rules or guidelines for the meetings
- Rotate the chair and recorder
- Include open agenda items for airing diverse opinions
- Use collaborative decision making to identify common ground
- Distribute reflective, action-oriented minutes quickly
- Set time limits for items
- Circulate questions or documents for discussion ahead of time
- Use flip charts to capture ideas
- Close with a "circle share" where everyone has a chance to speak without comment or interruption
- Honor professional development time
- Plan for a variety of individual, small group, and whole group formats
- Build in some fun
- Invite personal reflection at the close of the meeting

Take Note!

"In many meetings the administrator allowed staff to feel that they were having direct input into a number of key decisions for the directions of 'their school'".

The School Team

As the "community school" approach to education becomes more embedded in the day-to-day life of in-school administrators it becomes increasingly important to expand the concept of the school team. Consider the following:

- Attend inter-agency meetings whenever possible. Support the work of the team by following up on the work the school has to do. Connect with staff members following inter-agency meetings whenever their students are involved.
- Utilize professionals in health, justice, and social services as guest speakers and presenters – ie. Public Health and Dental Health.

Create your own inter-agency team by involving teachers, speech language pathologists, resource room teachers, social workers, teacher associates/assistants, educational psychologists, school administration to hold Early Observation and Planning Meetings throughout the year. These meetings are useful in elementary schools and involve teams talking about each grade or block (i.e. K,1,2) of students.

Supervision of School Team Members

While principals are considered to be responsible for supervision of staff members, the extent of that responsibility varies from system to system. Regardless of what those responsibilities are, clarifying your own beliefs about the topic can be a useful place to begin as you contemplate this aspect of your role. Issues that might be considered are:

- What are my beliefs about supervision and professional growth?
- What is expected of me by staff, community and the board of education?
- What supports do I need in the process?
- What is the school system policy regarding supervision of staff?
- What has been the practice in the system around supervision?

For more information and resources, refer to Staff Supervision and Evaluation, p. 115

Positive Presuppositions About Supervision

Staff members:

- are life-long, self-directed learners,
- continually evaluate their own performance,
- rely on both practical knowledge and research-based theoretical knowledge, and
- actively seek challenging and innovative practices.

?
Information Here

F.A.Q. "What can I do as an administrator to support the professional growth of the members of the staff for whom I am responsible?"

Model it! Celebrate it! Keep professional growth front and center!

Assisting staff members to move towards professionalism in their practice is an important role of the principal. Professional growth plans and professional portfolios are two models that allow for teacher ownership and control. There are a number of resources available for both administrators and teachers to learn about the creation of professional portfolios and growth plans.

Resources to Remember

- http://www.interaction-sinc.com/home.html
- http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/~vsvede/index.html
-
-

The Principal's Own Professional Growth

Consider that the school system is responsible for evaluating your work in the school. To support the school division's role in your evaluation think about formulating goals and setting direction and sharing these with your supervisor. While setting goals is an important part of your growth as an administrator, consider other ways to enhance your growth as a professional. Resources that might be of interest or support can be found at the websites noted in the sidebar.

Other opportunities:

- Membership in Saskatchewan School Based Administrators, Saskatchewan Council of Educational Administrators, Canadian Association of Principals.
- Consider joining professional groups and/or attending conferences outside of your areas of expertise.
- Network with trusted colleagues and establish a mentoring relationship.

Activities For Your School

Before School Opens

Send a "Welcome Back" letter to all staff in August.

Starting the school year with the staff is much the same as starting with the students – you want to get off on the right foot! *Consider* some **team-building exercises** for the first staff meeting or get-together.

Team-Building Activities

Discover which staff participated in a summer p.d. activity. Consider ways to acknowledge, share, celebrate their learning.

"Think about taking a staff meeting out of the school. Wanuskewin or the park is a great place to go. Consider going on a hike where stations are set up to do challenges (physical and mental). Bring treats. Audiotape discussions on the challenges and dreams they have for their students and school. Write belief statements. Great team building and collaboration."

ACTIVITIES – BEFORE SCHOOL OPENS

Fall

"The agenda for staff meetings at our school goes by staff member's names in alphabetical order. When it is your turn you can bring forward anything you want – questions, issues, information, reports on committee activities, reports on local association or STF business. The agenda always "rolls", names bump down one place at each meeting. That way no one is always first/last. We also take turns as chair and secretary and for bringing lunch. As principal I bring forward my report when my name comes up."

Have **fun** at staff meetings! Remember the healing and stress relieving power of laughter. Take a risk and do something really silly at a staff meeting. For some outrageous suggestions see *Outrageous Pursuits* by John Dyer.

Establish a **staff supervision plan**. Share with all staff.

Meet with **each staff member** to review professional growth goals and plans and professional development needs.

ACTIVITIES – FALL

"I draw a teacher's name at the start of every staff meeting. If you are there, you get a prize. It has improved our commitment to starting meetings on time."

Plan Staff Social Functions.

- Staff excursions in fall that involve all staff and held at a retreat setting.
- Pot luck lunches and monthly staff socials.
- Establish a social committee to plan functions.

10-5

Winter

Review staff development plans with staff. Modify, adapt, celebrate as necessary.

Check deadline for submission of supervision documentation for professional and support staff to the Division office.

Work with the Local Board and/or School / Parent Advisory Councils and SRC to plan activities for Staff Appreciation Week. (usually held in February.)

Model your concept of teamwork, or … **don't let the paper work get you down!!!!!**

Be visible in the staff room, on the playground, in the hallways, in the classrooms, at extra curricular activities.

Give a staff member the gift of time: take a supervision, teach a class, take a group of students.

Sit and chat with staff … doughnuts help!

Build in some light-hearted fun at those winter staff meetings.

Ensure that all staff has the information they need about the upcoming Teacher Convention and Division Professional Development Institute.

"What I really appreciated was the time when the principal offered to cover my class for me so I could attend my daughter's class assembly at her school. My daughter was so surprised to see me! It's those little things that the principal does that are so important and make us feel valued as staff members and as people!"

"Our administrator spends time doing elementary supervision even though his teaching time is spent in the middle years grades."

Spring

Attend **SSBA/SCEA Conference** (Saskatchewan School Based Administrators and Saskatchewan Council of Educational Administrators Joint Conference held every second year).

Establish a system to set up **committees and extracurricular activities** for next year. Consider a sign-up sheet or rotation.

Thank the staff for their participation in the supervision processes.

Review with staff professional growth opportunities available in the summer.

Invite other human services agencies to review the year.

Year End Review

Developing an Effective School Team: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Opens

- ✓ Send "Welcome Back" letter to all staff
- ✓ Plan some fun and light team-building activities
- ✓ Plan to recognize staff P.D. opportunities from the summer

Fall

- ✓ Carefully plan your staff meeting:
  - build in fun
  - build in p.d.
  - build in different group processes
- ✓ Plan social functions
- ✓ Establish staff supervision plan and share with all staff

Winter

- ✓ Review staff development process
- ✓ Send supervision reports to division office
- ✓ Involve others in planning Staff Appreciation Week activities
- ✓ "Be There!"
- ✓ Provide information about teacher conventions and institutes

Spring

- ✓ Attend and encourage attendance at Special Subject Councils (SSBA/SCEA/SMYA)
- ✓ Review professional growth opportunities available in the summer
- ✓ Thank staff for their commitment to professional growth
- ✓ Organize a year-end review with Human Service Organizations

Resources

Biech, E., Ed. (2001). *The Pfeiffer Book of Successful Team-Building Tools.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass/Pfeiffer.

Burke, K. (1997). *Designing Professional Portfolios for Change.* Arlington Heights, IL: IRI/Skylight Training.

Costa, A., & Garmston, R.J. (2002). *Cognitive Coaching: A Foundation for Renaissance Schools.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Dyer, J. (2000). *Outrageous Pursuits: 40, 50, 100 Many, Many Ways to Enhance A Positive Learning Environment.* Calgary, AB: HeadSmart, Inc.

Garmston, R. & Wellman, B. (1999). *The Adaptive School: A Sourcebook for Developing Collaborative Groups.* Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon.

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. (1993). *Principals For Our Changing Schools.* Regina, SK: Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

Stephanson, S. (1994). *School Based Planning: Talking and Growing Together.* Brampton, ON: School Success Consulting.

Thaigarajn, W. & Parker, G. (1999). *Teamwork and Teamplay: Games & Activities for Building and Training Teams.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Developing an Effective School Team

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Developing an Effective School Team

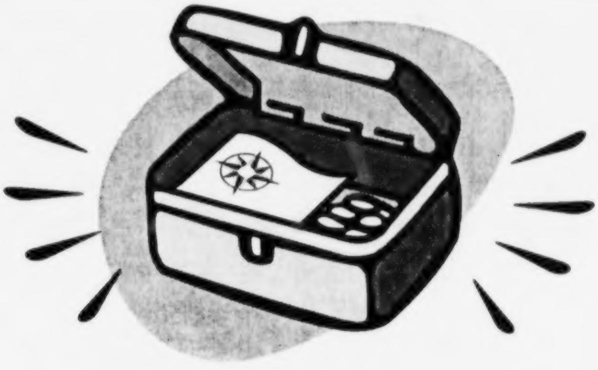
2. Working with Staff: Staff Development

3. Team Exercises
    - ET: Exploring Characteristics of Effective Teams
    - Quotes from Experts: An Inter-Team Contest
    - Slogans: An Intact Team Icebreaker
    - Words to Team By: A Different Kind of Assessment Tool
    - Team Hats: A Closing Activity

4. The "10-5 Report"

5. Year-End Review with Human Service Partners

6. Video Resources for Teambuilding

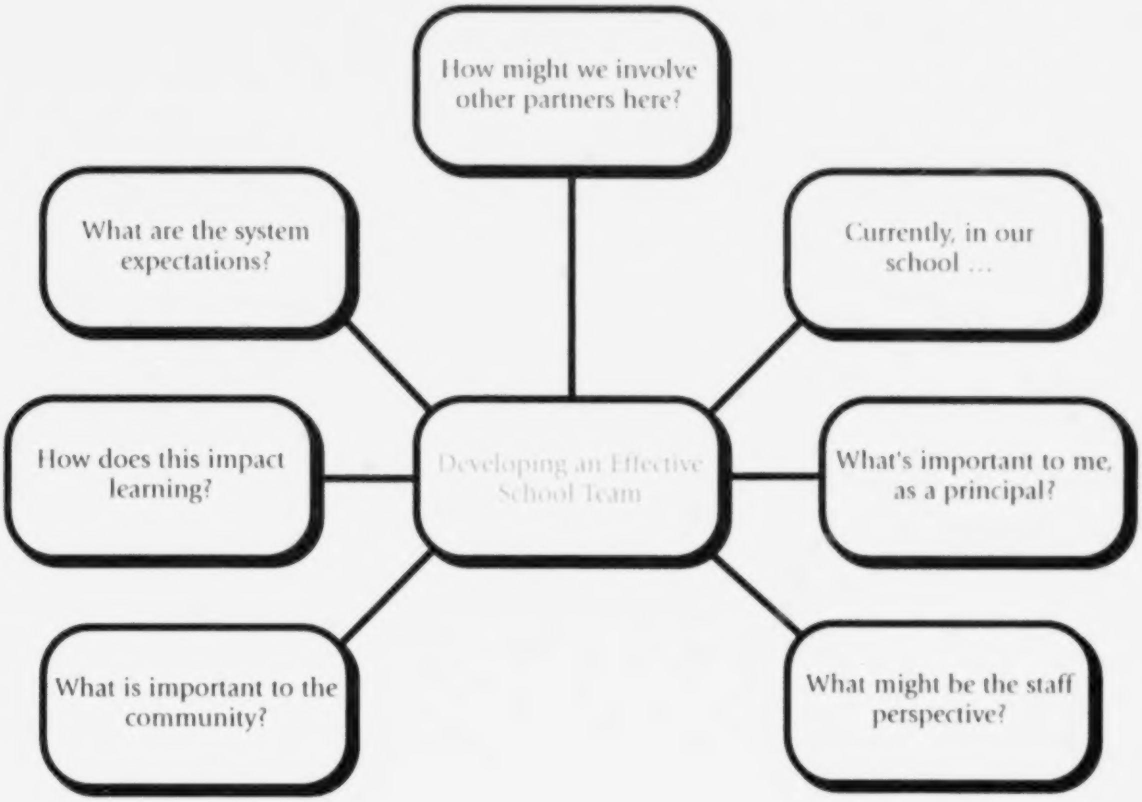


Flexibility: Developing an Effective School Team

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Flexibility for Developing an Effective School Team.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school ...
How does this impact learning?
Developing an Effective School Team
What's important to me, as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Developing an Effective School Team

Exploring Characteristics of Effective Teams

Purpose:

1. To identify characteristics of effective teams.
2. To work cooperatively and creatively in self-selected teams

Team Size:

10 to 50 participants form themselves into teams of 3 to 7 members

Required Resources:

1. 20 or more index cards with different characteristics of effective teams.
2. 4 blank index cards for each participant.

Time:

45 minutes

Room Setup:

Chairs arranged around rectangular or round tables.

Steps:

1. **Get started.** Begin the game quickly. Tell the participants, "I'd like to begin right off with a team activity that will help us get to know one another. It will also allow us to explore the characteristics of effective teams."
2. **Write cards.** Hand out four blank index cards to each participant. Ask them to write down one characteristic of effective teams on each card. The characteristics could be based on the participants' personal experiences or on what they have read.
3. **Distribute cards.** After about 3 minutes, collect opinion cards from participants. Add your prepared cards to this pile. Mix the cards well and give three cards to each participant. Ask the participants to study the team characteristics and arrange them according to their personal evaluation – from the most to the least powerful characteristic.
4. **Exchange cards.** Arrange the remaining opinion cards on a large table at one side of the room. Tell the participants that they may discard cards from their hands and pick up better replacements. Participants must work silently; they should not talk to one another during this phase of the game. At the end of this exchange, each participant should have three cards that

may or may not include cards from the original set.

5. **Swap cards.** Instruct participants to exchange cards with one another to make their hands better reflect their personal opinions about the characteristics of effective teams. In this phase, any participant may swap cards with any other participant; every participant must exchange at least one card.
6. **Form teams.** Ask participants to compare their cards with others' and to form teams with people holding similar cards. Each team should have at least three and not more than seven members. The team must reduce its total number of cards to three. It must discard all other cards, and the three cards it keeps must meet with everyone's approval.
7. **Prepare posters.** Ask each team to prepare a graphic poster that reflects its three final cards. This poster should not include any text.
8. **Present the posters.** After 5 minutes, select a team at random and ask them to come to the front of the room. This team silently displays its poster, and members of the other teams guess aloud the characteristics of effective teams depicted in the poster. After 15 seconds members of the display team read the characteristics listed in their three selected cards. Other teams take turns to make their presentations, using the same procedure.

Debriefing:

To maximize the learning outcomes from this activity, conduct a brief discussion session. Here are some suggested questions:

- What common themes emerge from the different posters?
- Use the three characteristics as a benchmark for your own team's effectiveness. How does your team rate on each of these characteristics?
- Which team characteristic is the most powerful one for improving its effectiveness?
- Which characteristic do the teams have the least control of?
- Will the team-effectiveness characteristics change from one situation to another? If so, in what way?

Variations:

1. Use a set of prepared team-characteristics cards instead of asking the participants to write their own cards.
2. Ask participants to write a jingle incorporating their three final selections and to sing it instead of preparing and presenting a poster.
3. Ask participants to prepare and present a scenario that incorporates their three final selections.

Quotes From Experts

An Inter-Team Contest

Purpose:

1. To explore essential elements of teamwork by reflecting on quotes and identifying their relevance
2. To reflect on the teamwork that is involved in preparing and making a presentation

Team Size:

Any number of participants, divided into teams of 3 to 7 members each

Required Resources:

Quote cards. Make photocopies of quotes from experts on card stock. Make two copies of each page and cut the individual cards. You should have pairs of cards for each quote.

Time:

30-45 minutes; the exact time depends on the number of teams

Room Setup:

Chairs around rectangular or round tables

Steps:

1. Organize participants into teams of 3 to 7 members each. Select as many quote cards as there are teams. Distribute the cards in such a way that each team gets two different quotes and each quote is given to two different teams.
2. Ask the teams to reflect on each quote, discover its deeper meaning, and identify its relevance to effective teamwork. Warn the teams that they will be asked to make a 30-second presentation on each quote they received. Announce a suitable time limit of 10-15 minutes. Start the timer.
3. Pause while the teams work on analyzing the quotes and preparing their presentations. Remind the teams that they should work on both quotes.
4. Announce a 1-minute warning. A minute later, blow the whistle to signal the end of the preparation time.
5. Read one of the quotes (or display it on the screen). Ask the members of the two teams that worked on this quote to stand up. Send one team out of the room.

6. Ask the other team to make its presentation. Cut it off after 30 seconds if the team does not stop. Call the other to the room and have its spokesperson make the presentation.
7. After the two presentations, invite comments from the audience. If appropriate, ask the audience to vote (by their applause) to identify the better presentation.
8. Repeat the same procedure with the other quotes.

Debriefing:

Explain to participants that, although the content of the quotes have been thoroughly discussed, you would like to spend some time discussing the process by which teams developed their presentations. Use these suggested questions for debriefing:

- Did all members of the team contribute to the design of the presentation?
- Did the team members play different roles in the analysis of the quote and the preparation of the presentation? If so, what were the different roles?
- How did the team handle the two different quotes: both at the same time or one after the other? Did any team divide themselves into sub-teams for handling the two quotes? How satisfied were you with the way you managed the time?
- How did you select the team member (or members) to make the presentation?
- How do the quotes that you heard apply to your teamwork in preparing and making the presentation?

Variation:

Use "Quotes from Experts" as a closing activity. Encourage the teams to relate the quotes to the new principles and procedures they learned earlier.

Everyone is needed, but no one is necessary.

Bruce Coslet

The ratio of We's to I's is the best indicator of the development of a team.

Lewis B. Eigen

The needs of the team are best met when we meet the needs of individual persons.

Max Depree

Do you want a collection of brilliant minds or a brilliant collection of minds?

R. Meredith

Teams share the burden and divide the grief.

Doug Smith

The strength of the team is each individual member... The strength of each member is the team.

Phil Jackson

Team members who feel threatened but who are not aware of it become rigid – and that stops teamwork.

Will Schultz

A team is more than a collection of people. It is a process of give and take.

Barbara Clacel and
Emile Robert, Jr.

Talent wins games, but teamwork wins championships.

Michael Jordan

None of us is as smart as all of us.

Ken Blanchard

Slogans

An Intact Team Icebreaker

Purpose:

1. To give team members an opportunity to reflect on the image of the team
2. To provide an opportunity to assess the team with images rather than numbers

Team Size:

Designed for an intact team of less than 10 members; however, it can be adapted for use in a course for team leaders

Required Resources:

A copy of the "Slogans" handout for each person.

Time:

30-45 minutes

Room Setup:

Chairs in a circle or chairs around a round or rectangle table.

Steps:

1. Before the session, determine the outcomes you want to achieve. Do you want to use the exercise primarily as an icebreaker, or do you want it to be more of an assessment activity?

2. Explain the purpose of the activity to the group.

3. Distribute the handout. Ask each person to review the list of slogans and make his or her selection. Alert everyone to the fact that you will ask them to provide the reasons behind their choices.

4. Facilitate a discussion based on the responses. You may begin by going down the list asking if anyone selected each slogan. When you get a positive response, facilitate a discussion on that slogan by asking some of the following questions:
   - Why did you select this one?
   - What do you think the slogan means (some of the slogans have double meanings)?

- What is it about your team (i.e. what do you all do) that caused you to select this slogan?
- Would you be proud to have this slogan represent you?
- Would you edit or change the slogan in any way to better describe your team?

5. If time permits, discuss the slogans not selected.

Debriefing:
Close the session by reviewing the selected slogan. Ask:

- What does it say about our team that we selected these slogans?
- What does it say about our style? Values? Strengths? Weaknesses?
- Are there other slogans not on the list that you would prefer?
- Does this activity point us in the direction of things that need to change?

Variations:

1. Revise the list of slogans to include others that may be of greater interest to the team.
2. Make a transparency of the handout. Before beginning the discussion (step 4), tally the number of people who selected each slogan. Begin the discussion with the slogan receiving the most votes.
3. Make a game of the tally exercise by asking each person to guess which slogan will receive the most votes. Ask each person to write his or her name and selection on a piece of paper and fold it. Give a small prize to the person who guessed right. In addition, ask that person to begin the discussion by indicating why he or she selected that slogan.
4. Ask the team to rank the slogans. Turn the activity into a consensus-building exercise.
5. If time permits, you can close the activity by having some fun with the slogans. Before the session, delete the names of the companies from the handout. When you close the session, ask the team to name the company associated with each slogan.

Slogans

Directions: Please review the list of slogans and select the one that best represents your team now.

Endless Possibilities	Liz Claiborne
The Real Thing	Coca Cola
Drivers Wanted	Volkswagen*
Think Different	Apple
Ooh La La	Sassoon
Find Your Own Road	Saab
People Moving Ideas	GTE
In Touch With Tomorrow	Toshiba
It's All Within Your Reach	AT&T
Go Farther	Isuzu
Where Do You Want To Go Today?	Microsoft

*The full slogan is "On the highway of life there are drivers and passengers. Drivers wanted."

Words To Team By

A Different Kind of Assessment Tool

Purpose:

1. To help a team gain insight into some elements of its culture
2. To explore some basic team concepts such as goals, risk taking, norms, and decision making
3. To engage in a perceptual team assessment
4. To practice consensus decision-making skills

Team Size:

Designed primarily for use with an intact team of less than 10 people; however, it can be used in an open-enrollment group to explore some basic team concepts, in which case the exercise can be done as a small group activity.

Required Resources:

1 copy of the "Words to Team By" handout for each person.

Time:

1 hour

Room Setup:

Chairs in a circle or chairs around a rectangular or round table.

Steps:

1. Clarify the purpose of the session.
2. Distribute a copy of the handout to each person. Ask the team to read the quotes and think about the meaning and/or implications of each quote for successful teamwork.
3. Facilitate a discussion of each quote beginning with this question: "What are the implications of this quote for successful teamwork?" Some other questions you might use include:
    - Why is this important for a team?
    - Can you give us some examples of how this works?
    - What happens when this factor is not present?
    - How does a team ensure that this factor is present?
    - If you are the team leader, what role should you play in this area?
    - If you are a team leader, how can you help?

4. If you are working with an intact team, you can go on to the next phase of the exercise by asking:
   - Which quote best represents our team at the present time?
5. Continuing with an intact team you can facilitate a discussion around the following questions:
   - Which quote would you like to have represent us in the future? Think of it as an advertising slogan.
   - Which quote would you like to see in an ad promoting our team to customers, management, and other potential team members?
6. Summarize the learning points from the exercise. In the case of an intact team, you may want to discuss "next steps" for the team in light of the results of steps and 4 and 5.

Variations:

1. In a training group, the handout can be turned into a consensus exercise. Simply ask each person to rank the quotes in terms of their importance for successful teamwork and then have each group work toward a consensus on the rankings.
2. With an intact team, the consensus activity can be "rank the quotes in terms of their importance for our success, with 1 being most important and 15 being least important." This is a double-barreled activity, because team members are discussing the concepts at the same time they are learning how to reach a consensus.

Words to Team By

If you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there.
Chinese proverb

A decision is responsible when the group that makes it has to answer for it to those who are directly or indirectly affected by it.
Charles Frankel

Never insult an alligator until you've crossed the river.
Cordell Hull

You miss 100% of the shots you never take.
Wayne Gretzky

A certain amount of opposition is of great help. Kites rise against, not with the wind.
John Neal

To know the road ahead, ask those coming back.
Chinese proverb

I don't know what the key to success is, but the key to failure is trying to please everyone.
Bill Cosby

Don't find fault, find a remedy.
Henry Ford

A good heart is better than all the heads in the world.
Leo Burnett

If you obey all the rules, you miss all the fun.
Katherine Hepburn

If you lose the power to laugh, you lose the power to think.
Clarence Darrow

When you reach for the stars, you might not get one, but you won't come up with a handful of mud either.
Leo Burnett

Small problems are difficult to see, but easy to fix. However, when you let these problems develop, they are easy to see but difficult to fix.
Niccolo Machiavelli

Better to ask twice than to lose your way once.
Danish proverb

Team Hats

A Closing Activity

Purpose:

1. To close a team-building session on a positive note
2. To provide members of an intact team with positive, playful feedback

Team Size:

Works best with an intact team of less than 10. However, it can be used with a large group or training class that has been working together in a series of teams for at least 1 day.

Required Resources:

1. A white painter's hat or similar white cotton hat for each person.
2. Lots of felt-tip markers in a variety of colors.
3. A bag or box.

Time:

30 minutes

Room Setup:

Chairs around a round or rectangular table.

Steps:

1. Before the session, write the name of each person on a small piece of paper. Fold the paper so that the name cannot be seen. Put the pieces of paper in a bag or box.
2. Place a large number of different colored markers in the center of the table.
3. Distribute a hat to each person.
4. Pass the bag or box around and ask each person to select a piece of paper. If a person selects his or her own name, he or she should return it and pick another piece of paper.
5. Explain that each person should decorate the hat with words, drawings, sayings, and/or logos that he or she feels represent the person selected. Emphasize that the decorations should be positive. The person's name should also be clearly printed on the hat.

6. When everyone is finished, the hats should be exchanged so that each person has the hat that has been prepared for him or her.
7. Ask each person to show his or her hat to the group and describe his or her reactions to it.
   - How does he/she feel about the decorations?
   - Does he/she understand all the decorations?
   - Does he/she agree with them?
   - What other items would he/she have added to this hat?
   - How does he/she feel about wearing the hat now?
   - Would he/she wear the hat outside the session?

8. At some point take a picture of the team with everyone wearing their hats. After the session, get a sufficient number of reprints so that each person gets a copy of the picture.

Debriefing:

Conclude the session with a brief discussion of the value of the activity.

- How do you feel about the activity?
- How did it help us grow as a team?
- What should we do with the hats?
- Should we wear the hats at our next team meeting?

Variations:

1. Use name card tents instead of hats.
2. Ask each person to decorate his or her own hat.
3. Display the hats in the school showcase.

The "10-5 Report"

The "10-5 Report" is so named because it should take about ten minutes to write and five minutes to read. I would welcome the submission of "10-5s" about every four to six weeks.

Each report is divided into three parts:

1. A quick update of job-related activities (pass along your success stories from the classroom, with individual students or from extra curricular activities.) Don't forget your own personal success.

2. A blunt description of your morale and your opinion of the overall morale of the school.

3. An idea for improving the efficiency or effectiveness of your job, the school or our school system.

I would like to hear from everyone from time to time.

Why?

10 – 5's will let me know how you are doing!

10 – 5's will let me know how we are doing!

(I always reply in writing to a teacher's written or verbal "10-5").

Christine Boyczuk, 2002

Year-End Review with Human Service Partners

Purpose:

1. To review our year.
2. To celebrate our accomplishments and to begin planning for next year.

Organizations represented: (consider representatives from Social Services, Regional Intersectoral Committee, Justice, Health, Board Trustee, School Division Office, Shared Service Staff, Special Education Teacher)

__________________, __________________, __________________,

Agenda:

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Reflecting

As we reflect on how we have collaborated this year, creating an learning community which supports student learning …

What are our impressions?

(This can be done in a round table fashion, allowing each member to share without interruption.)

3. Analysing Causal Factors.

As we think about our working together, what supported our efforts? What may have been some barriers? What influenced our actions or thinking? How did our working together this year compare with our expectations, last year etc.?

(This can be done in a partner sharing followed by large group sharing. Or, you could arrange a walk about carousel process, using flip charts.)

4. Constructing New Learnings
As we consider our perceptions and conversations thus far, what meaning are we making? What insights are we developing from the analyses? How might we synthesize this information?

(As we are wanting to hear all voices, this is best done in a small group format with a recorder for large group sharing.)

5. Commit to Application
As we anticipate next year, what do we want to remember from today's thinking and discussion? What might we have to modify, adapt or change?

(This can be done as individuals on file cards followed by large group sharing.)

6. Reflecting on the Process.
Reflecting on today's Human Service and School Year-End Review, how has this process facilitated our working together as a wider community for student learning?

(This can be done in a round table format, allowing each to share his or her thinking.)

7. Next Meeting (August)

Video Resources for Team Building

These resources are excellent when you are wanting to open a discussion about the importance of working collaboratively as a team. All are available from the Stewart Resources Centre at the STF. Go to the STF website www.stf.sk.ca and link to the Teaching Resources - Professional Library. Each of the resources has an accompanying discussion guide and can easily be incorporated into any staff meeting.

Fish! Tales: Real Life Stories To Help You Transform Your Workplace And Your Life (2002). Stephen C. Lundin, John Christenson and Harry Paul.

Fish! A Remarkable Way to Boost Morale And Improve Results (2000). Stephen C. Lundin, John Christensen, and Harry Paul.

Fish! Catch the Energy, Release the Potential (Videorecording and kit) (1998). Owen-Stewart Performance Resources.

Who Moved My Cheese? (Videorecording) (1999). Based on the book by Spencer Johnson. Owen-Stewart Performance Resources.

Building Professional Learning Communities (Videorecording) (2001). Richard Dufour

Managing
School
Resources

Managing School Resources

Introduction 218

Human Resources 219

Time Management 219

Stress Management 220

Budgeting and Finance 222

Activities For Your School 223

Before School Opens 223

Fall 224

Winter 225

Spring 226

Managing School Resources: School Activities At A Glance 227

Resources 228

Travel Kit 229

Managing School Resources

Introduction

The Education Act, 1995, Section 175(1) says the principal shall:

- assign, in consultation with members of staff, the duties of each member of the teaching staff;
- prescribe the duties and functions of assistants and support staff;
- develop, in cooperation with the staff, the procedures and standards to be applied in evaluation of the progress of pupils and in making promotions;
- develop, in cooperation with the staff, procedures for preparation of reports to parents or guardians on the progress of pupils and establish mutually acceptable and beneficial channels for communication and make recommendations to the director with respect to staffing;
- prepare and furnish to the director, the board of education or the conseil scolaire and the department any reports and returns that may be required from time to time with respect to the school.

The Role of the Principal

As principal you will be responsible, to some degree, for the school's financial accounts, human resources, facilities, equipment, services and educational supplies.

Specific management tasks may include:
Resource allocation
Scheduling and timetables
Staff assignments
Purchasing
Student services
Reporting and record keeping

You may also be involved in fundraising, partnerships, sponsorships, and other activities that extend the resources of the school.

School Division Policy

As you consider the issues involved in managing the resources of the school, remind yourself about some of the words that your school division policy uses when referring to this subject. Record them in the box provided.

Policy and Practice Direction from my School Division

-
-
-
-
-

Human Resources

Time Management

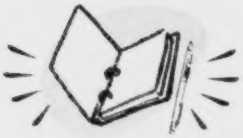
The first and most important human resource you possess is yourself. Being able to perform well in your multi-faceted and demanding role as principal requires first that you set your own priorities for what is doable. Managing time can be a matter of setting priorities among the many tasks you might juggle in a day. Consider frequent reflection on the mission statement of the school as a guide to the use of your time. The way in which you prioritize your tasks should be guided by your mission.

How do you spend your time?

Taking inventory of the tasks you do over one or two days can help you sort out for yourself which tasks take up most of your time. Once you realize how much time you spend for each kind of task you have some of the information to make changes in your time management strategies if you so desire. See travel kit for examples of time management strategies.

Resources to Remember

- *The One Minute Manager,* Blanchard (1983)
- *First Things First: To Live, To Learn, To Leave A Legacy,* Covey (1994)
-
-



Reflection

Reminding yourself of how you have dealt with prioritizing tasks in the past can help you to reflect on strategies that have worked for you before. Think about those days when you felt encouraged and on top of tasks as well as those times when you were not as successful at getting things done.

- *As you think back over recent days what are your impressions of your ability to manage your time?*
- *What are some specific incidents that lead you to these impressions?*
- *What might be some strategies you can use to assist you with time management?*
- *What resources might be helpful to you in your efforts? Organizational? Colleagues?*

Stress Management

There are a number of things to consider when contemplating developing a personal plan for managing stress. Researchers suggest that people who keep healthy while under continuing stress show three main attributes: hardiness, optimism and coherence.

Hardiness is characterized by one's sense of:
- Control, a belief in your own ability to influence events,
- Commitment, an approach to life that is marked by curiosity, and a sense of meaningfulness,
- Challenge, an expectation that change is normal, and results in growing and learning.

Optimism is characterized by one's sense of:
- Positive outcome, an expectation that good things will happen,
- Willingness to "shrug off" those aspects of life that cannot be controlled or changed.

Coherence is characterized by one's sense of:
- Comprehensibility, a sense that your environment is structured,predictable and explicable,
- Manageability, a belief that sufficient resources are available to deal with the environment,
- Meaning, a belief that the demands of the environment are worthy of your engagement through your time and energy.

(STF, 1999)

Stress Reducers in the Workplace:

- Getting recognition for what you do.
- Being in control of what you do.
- Having power to make decisions.
- Taking exercise breaks during the work day.
- Talking with colleagues and sharing the stressors.
-
-

Stress Management Tips

Relaxation Techniques

- Take a deep breath (3 is even better).
- Have a good laugh.
- Smile.
- Have a good yawn and a good stretch.
- Clench and unclench your teeth 3 or 4 times a day.
- Massage your finger "webs" or your whole hand.
- Put your hands in the "itsy, bitsy spider" position. Press your fingertips together and hold for a few minutes. It really works!

(SSBA, Module One)

Take Time In Your Day To:

- Go, in your thoughts, to a quiet, peaceful place.
- Play music that is relaxing to you.
- Do something you really like to do.
- Go for a walk.
- Cup your hands over your eyes and think BLACK to relax your eyes.

In The Grander Scheme Of Things:

- Eat properly – whatever that means to you.
- Get an adequate amount of sleep.
- Exercise regularly doing something you really enjoy.
- Focus and reject. Zoom in on the issue at hand and turn off "should be doings".
- Do your best work at your best time of day.
- Plan for "unplanned time".
- Be true to yourself.

Peters (1992)

Ten Suggestions for Reducing Stress

- Allow time for relaxation, hobbies, sports, TV, vacations.
- Rest is essential. Have a nap; go to bed early.
- Regular meals are essential. Don't skip lunch.
- Start to work out; you'll decrease stress.
- Humour does wonders: lighten up at home and school.
- What you model sets a tone that can contribute to the guilt that other staff members may feel. Do not reward overwork.
- Keep your hours at work, and at home, reasonable.
- Do not feel guilty when you leave work early (which for most people is really on time), to attend meaningful events in your personal life.
- Don't allow your work alone to define you.
- Define yourself by your ability to balance work-related stress.

Beresford (2001-2002)

Resources to Remember

- Principal's Short Course – Saskatchewan Educational Leadership Unit, University of Saskatchewan
- A mentor that you trust in your system
- Saskatchewan Learning: "Fees, Fundraising and Fairness"
- http:/www.SSTA.sk.ca /rsearch/finance/96-14.htm: "Alternate and Non-traditional Funding for K-12 Education in Saskatchewan"

Budgeting And Finance

Budgeting and financial procedures are usually specific to particular school divisions. If your school division does not have specific guidelines or offer training in their particular procedures for school-based budgeting, finding a trusted colleague or mentor to walk you through the specifics might be useful. Aside from the "nuts and bolts" of accounting, budgeting and finance, there are other issues to consider around managing the school's resources. The following reflective questions may help you sort out some of these issues. Although is may be advisable to encourage collaborative decision making whenever possible, when it comes to allocation of budget money it is also important to remember that budgetary matters are ultimately your responsibility as principal.

- What decision making processes concerning allocation of school resources am I comfortable with?
- How much decision making regarding allocating resources do I feel comfortable delegating?
- How is the school's mission statement reflected in the budgeting process and the budget document?

Getting and Spending is an excellent resource for school administrators on school finances from the SSTA!

Activities For Your School

Before School Opens

Design and establish **classroom accounting system**.

Check **School Division policy** regarding managing the finances of the school:

- Petty cash
- Procedures for accounts
- Software available for maintaining accounts
- Reporting procedures
- Deadlines for the budget year
- Signing authority for all accounts

"Be careful with money. Document everything!"

Review **Occupational Health and Safety** minutes.

Review **WHMIS** (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System) guidelines with staff.

Spend time with the school's secretary to clarify roles and expectations.

Ensure **staffing** is complete and all staff are notified of assignments and start dates.

Try to utilize strengths of individuals on staff when planning programs (ie. Phys.ed., arts ed.)

Ensure **timetabling** is complete and schedules are prepared for all staff.

Check **inventory** for purchases made at the end of the school year or over the summer.

Check **petty cash** accounts.

Set recess and student supervision schedules.

Check **equipment** – photocopiers, overheads, VCR, computers. Arrange for servicing if needed. Also check with staff for A.V. and technical needs.

Establish policies and budgets for use of photocopier, laminator, long distance telephone, color copier.

Fall

Complete **Principal's Statistical Report.**

Ensure the submission of the government statistical forms or **"purple turnaround forms".**

Update provincial **student tracking records.**

Obtain **bank statements** for all accounts.

Collect caution **fees**, student fees, lock fees, money owing for lost/damaged textbooks and library books.

Assign **lockers** and hand out locks.

Establish a **record keeping system** for anecdotal records of all meetings with students and parents. Consider using a binder or notebook.

Meet with staff to determine **spending priorities** for the year. Put systems in place for ordering of supplies and equipment that reflects the priorities.

"As a principal I like to be able to say "yes" when it comes to managing school resources. We have resources that are supposed to be used for students so I think we should be ready to say "yes" if we can. I know that it gives me a great deal of pleasure to be able to do that."

Consider how you may want to allocate unspent budget lines.

Talk to **community groups and organizations** that have used the school facility in the past. Establish timetables and procedures for opening and closing with all groups using the school.

Establish **procedures for inspections**: Boiler Inspector, Health Inspector.

Prepare **fire drill schedule**. Share expectations and procedures with staff and students.

Set recess and noon hour supervision schedule.

Consider what needs to be done in managing your own resources.

Being able to perform well in a multi-faceted and demanding role requires that you manage your time, set priorities, and look after yourself.

- Consider reading *The One Minute Manager* by Kenneth Blanchard, and *First Things First: To Live, To Learn, To Leave a Legacy* by Stephen Covey.

Collect all forms from staff (student registration, emergency contact, timetable, etc.)

Winter

Prepare the **yearly budget** and share with staff.

"As a school we put together our three-year instructional plan. We share that with the central office staff. Then we put together a proposed budget and the staff is directly involved in how we allocate those resources. We do it collaboratively. We say, "this is what we think we're going to get. Based on that, where do you feel we need to prioritize the spending of the money?" We break it down into items that fit in with our three-year instructional plan. The teachers who are directly involved in delivering that program have a lot of latitude in determining what resources they do need to get and then we operate within those budget lines."

Keep teachers **informed about expenditures** so they know if there will be a surplus or deficit.

Send letter to parents re: unpaid fees.

Order **equipment and supplies.**

Prepare preliminary **staffing and enrolment projections** for next year.

Participate in annual **facility review**. Encourage staff, division board trustee and central office staff to be part of the facility review. Prepare list of repairs, maintenance and upgrades, major and minor renovations.

Have **an Occupational Health & Safety meeting.**

Check **school/office supplies.**

Spring

Establish procedures for **textbook inventory and ordering.**

Ensure that **audiovisual equipment** is inventoried for repairs. Make sure school name, address, and phone numbers are on all equipment being sent out for repairs. Indicate on spreadsheet or checklist the serial numbers of all equipment being sent for repairs.

Talk to caretaker and maintenance staff about **repairs and maintenance** that need to be done over the summer.

Meet with any groups using the school facility over the summer.

Review **guidelines and expectations.**

Collect keys from teachers leaving the school.

Reconcile **classroom petty cash**, IA, Home Ec and SRC accounts.

Arrange for summer servicing of computers.

Compile an emergency contact list for summer.

Managing School Resources: School Activities at a Glance

Before School Opens

- ✓ Design classroom accounting system
- ✓ Review School Division policy
- ✓ Finalize staffing
- ✓ Connect with school secretary
- ✓ Finalize timetable and schedules
- ✓ Establish policies and budgets for photocopier, laminator, telephone, etc.
- ✓ Do an inventory of resources that arrived over the summer
- ✓ Review all accounts
- ✓ Check A.V. equipment
- ✓ Review OH&S file
- ✓ Provide WHMIS guidelines to staff
- ✓ Set student supervision schedules

Fall

- ✓ Complete P.S.R.
- ✓ Submit statistical forms to SaskLearning
- ✓ Update student tracking records
- ✓ Check with staff regarding technical needs
- ✓ Obtain bank statements
- ✓ Collect fees
- ✓ Assign lockers
- ✓ Establish a record-keeping system
- ✓ Collaboratively determine spending priorities
- ✓ Consider unspent budget lines
- ✓ Meet with community groups who use the school facility
- ✓ Establish inspection schedule
- ✓ Prepare fire drill schedule
- ✓ Consider how you are going to manage your own resources
- ✓ Collect all forms from staff

Winter

- ✓ Prepare yearly budget and share with staff
- ✓ Update teachers on school accounts
- ✓ Order equipment and supplies
- ✓ Prepare enrolment and staffing projections
- ✓ Participate in annual facility review
- ✓ Have an OH&S meeting
- ✓ Check school/office supplies
- ✓ Send letter to parents re: unpaid fees

Spring

- ✓ Establish textbook inventory and ordering process
- ✓ Inventory A.V. equipment
- ✓ Arrange for repairs
- ✓ Review maintenance and repairs with summer caretakers
- ✓ Organize for effective summer "shut down" of classrooms, supply rooms, LRC
- ✓ Review summer facility use and expectations
- ✓ Collect keys from teachers leaving the school
- ✓ Reconcile classroom petty cash accounts
- ✓ Arrange for servicing of computers
- ✓ Arrange for emergency contact over summer

Resources

Blanchard, K.B., Spencer, J. (1983). *The One Minute Manager.* New York, NY: Berkley Books.

Beresford, L. (December 2001-January 2002). "Do You Stop To Smell The Roses". *The Register.*

Covey, S., Merrill, A.R., Merrill, R.R. (1994). *First Things First: To Live, To Learn, To Leave A Legacy.* New York, NY: Simon and Schuster.

Peters, T. (1992, October). "Standing Still To Soar". *Canadian.*

Saskatchewan Learning. *Fees, Fundraising and Fairness.* Regina, SK: Queens Printer.

Saskatchewan School Trustees Association. *Board Development Program: Finance – Getting and Spending.* Regina, SK: Saskatchewan School Trustees Association.

Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation. (1999). *Creating A Supportive Environment: An Administrator's Handbook For Working With Beginning Teachers.* Saskatoon, SK: STF.

Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation. (1992). *Saskatchewan School-Based Administrator's Professional Development Program. Module One.* Saskatoon, SK: STF.

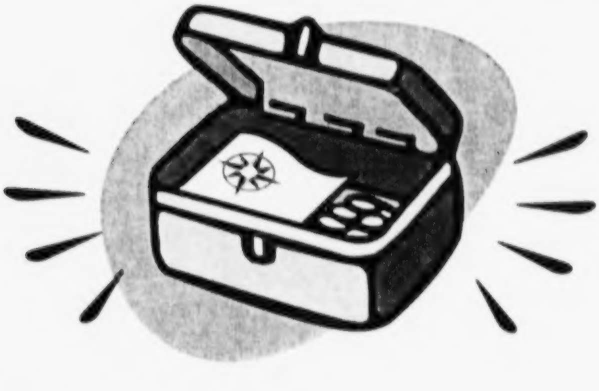
Managing School Resources

Travel Kit

1. Flexibility: Managing School Resources

2. Survival Skills: Time Wasters
    - Myths
    - Lists

3. Organization and Planning: First of the Year

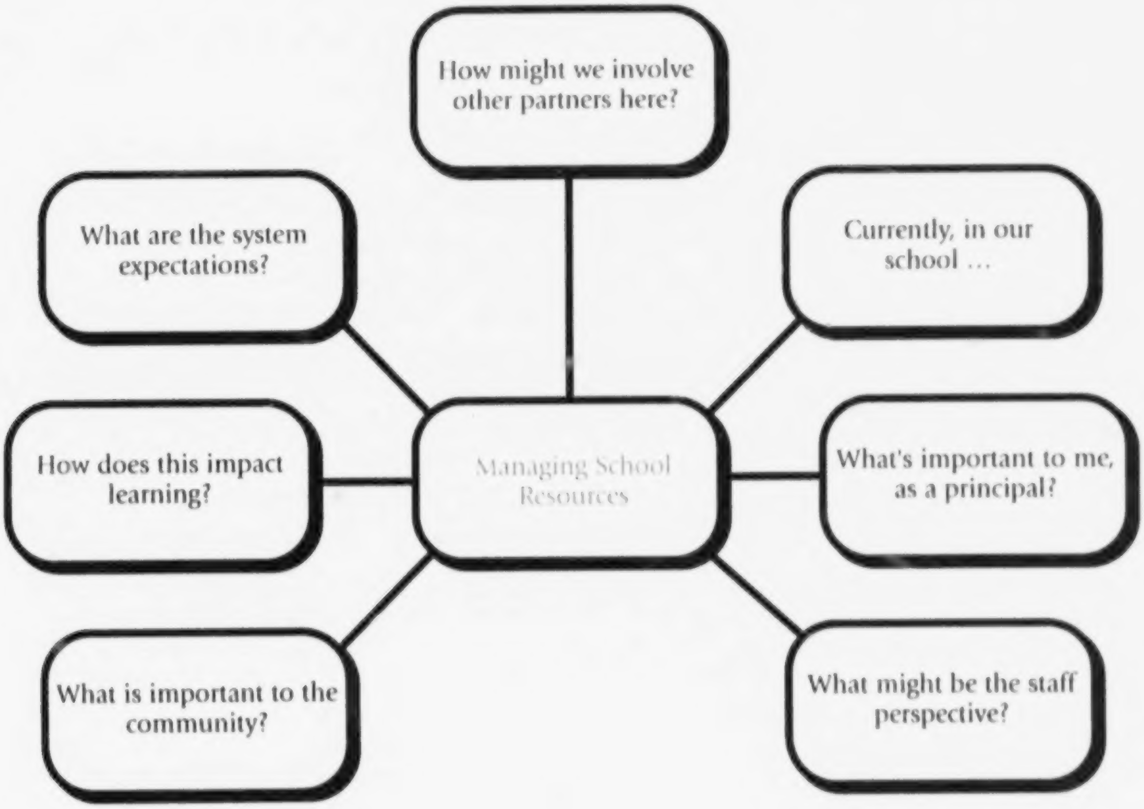


Flexibility: Managing School Resources

Good administrators recognize the importance of flexibility: the ability to step beyond and outside oneself and look at a situation from a different perspective. (Costa & Garmston, 2002)

Having the mental skills of flexibility allows you to shift from an egocentric to macrocentric view; between a bird's-eye view (detail) and an eagle-eye focus (wide-frame); between the present and the future; between an individual and a group.

The following template and reflection stems can assist you, as principal, to consider different perspectives on the topic of Managing School Resources.


How might we involve other partners here?
What are the system expectations?
Currently, in our school ...
How does this impact learning?
Managing School Resources
What's important to me, as a principal?
What is important to the community?
What might be the staff perspective?

Flexibility for Managing School Resources

Survival Skills

Time Wasters

Everyone has the same amount of time each day, and each of us wastes some of our allotment.

Time/Self-Management Myths

Myth 1

The more time I spend at work the more I will get done; more is better.

Clarification – The relationship between time and productivity is curvilinear – initially, as time goes up, productivity goes up but after a point, productivity goes down as time goes up! Be careful about perseverating at a task.

Myth 2

I operate with the open-door policy.

Clarification – Take time to greet people and be available for them but take time for other duties too. Start by organizing your time and plan to close the door for specific periods to get your paperwork done, make telephone calls and make plans to continue to organize yourself.

Myth 3

The principal's job is very important; I had better do it all myself.

Clarification – You are responsible for the organization, but you can't do it all, so don't try – DELEGATE.

Myth 4

I just don't have the time for it with all the expectations placed on me. Who's in control?

Clarification – You are responsible for your organization, take control and run it; start with your time.

Myth 5

I must read my mail – all of it!

Clarification – Don't let the mail control you – you control it!

Myth 6

Some problems will just go away if I pay no attention to them. Besides, I really don't have time now to deal with it.

Clarification – The ostrich's problems don't go away when he sticks his head in the sand and neither will yours. Spend one-half hour now and save four hours down the road!

Part of the difficulty associated with the principal's efficient use of time lies in the characteristics of a principal's work life = brevity (95 percent of a principal's tasks last one minute or less); fragmentation (122-149 activities per day or 14-7 activities per hour, average of 400 interruptions per day); and variety (endless by nature).

Time Wasters

Time wasters have been studied for many years and some very useful lists have been developed. Time wasters are essentially divided into two areas: internal and external types.

- Telephones and telephone interruptions.
- Drop-in visitors and socializing.
- Meetings – scheduled as well as unscheduled.
- Procrastination.
- Indecision.
- Paper work.
- Mail.
- Cluttered desks and shuffling papers.
- Personal disorganization and searching for items.
- Lack of clear communication and instruction and not listening.
- Inability to say "NO".
- Crisis situations for which planning ahead was not possible.
- Public relations and business lunches.
- Lack of objectives, priorities or deadlines: dealing with trivia.
- Involvement in routine and detail that should be delegated.
- Attempting too much at one time and underestimating the time it takes to do it.
- Failure to set up clear lines of responsibility and authority.
- Inadequate, inaccurate or delayed information from others.
- Lack of standard and progress reports – accountability.
- Fatigue.
- Forgetting things.
- Perfectionism.
- Self-interruptions.
- Worry.
- Commuting.

Organize the time wasters into internal and external types. For each type rank order them for you. Plan how to get rid of the most serious offenses.

Time wasters are an enemy and can be eliminated or at least significantly reduced.

Organization and Planning

First of the Year

Much of the enthusiasm, motivation and success for the year depends on how well the principal organizes the first few weeks of the school year. The first weeks are crucial because they can set the tone for the entire year.

If the principal is not organized and/or not concerned about the staff and students, the year is likely to begin and end with confusion, apathy and little or no significant achievement for anyone. If, on the other hand, the principal demonstrates willingness and enthusiasm to work closely with staff members and students, the school year can be productive and enjoyable. A good attitude is contagious.

Logistics – How Can You Start The Year Right?

- Maintain high visibility throughout the school and throughout the school day. As you walk through the halls and around the building, talk informally with teachers and students – as a person, not as an administrator.

- Visit each classroom during the first week of each month for a facility check. Make sure that all air conditioners and lights work, that seating capacity and supply of materials are adequate, and that the teacher does not have any questions about his or her room, schedule or school policies.

- At the initial staff meeting, clearly state the school goals and objectives. These objectives should be specific and listed in order of importance.

- Avoid long, tedious meetings during the rest of the year. Instead of using unimaginative lectures, use visual aids to emphasize points. Address teachers' concerns and encourage their active participation. Talk with them, not at them.

- Be certain that all staff – especially new teachers – know how to use instructional equipment (projectors, computers) and that the equipment is in working order.

- Staff members should also have an adequate supply of materials such as paper, pencils, pens, books, and should know exactly how and where to locate additional supplies and equipment.

- Establish an accessible resource room for teachers. All too often, textbooks used in the classroom do not have sufficient information, additional problems, or explanations of objectives. The resource room should provide any extra materials teachers might need.

- Keep a beginning-of-the-year folder that includes letters to parents and staff, previous years' teaching schedules, minutes and agendas of staff meetings, reflections on how to improve "back to school."

Establishing Good Relations

- Take the initiative to improve all lines of communication within the school. Hold information conferences at least once a month with staff members.

- Present expectations clearly and in a positive manner, and be certain that any new teachers are thoroughly acquainted with all rules, regulations, policies and procedures.

- Make sure that all teachers have a copy of the staff and student handbooks.

- Post a calendar in a central location and list all dates for special events in the school and community. Keep parents informed about what is going on in your school.

- Establish a good relationship with the local media. Newspapers, television and radio stations can keep the community informed about and involved in your school and, at the same time, promote attendance at sporting events and special activities.

- Be certain that students also know what is expected of them and that you care about them as people. Make sure each student has a copy of the student handbook.

- Ensure a balanced teacher-student teaching load. When possible, try to accommodate teachers' preferences for class schedules and planning times.

- Support teachers. Encourage their input and active participation in all facets of the school. Include them in goal setting and problem solving. Ask for their input when making any decisions that affect them.

- Provide teachers with leadership opportunities in school organizations. Ask them to chair committees and task forces. Trust their judgment.

- Be sure to include teachers in planning professional development programs.

- Be firm and fair in dealing with staff. Enforce rules and regulations equally and recognize teachers for their superior professional performance.

- Give staff members positive reinforcement as often as possible; never criticize, condemn or complain.

- Minimize paperwork and maximize actual teaching time. Avoid classroom interruptions by providing written daily announcements or by making announcements over the public address system during homeroom time.

- Principals must be flexible, in search of new ideas and open to change. They should evaluate themselves often, "How could I have been more effective in this situation? What other approaches could I use?"

- Deal openly and rationally with others and strive to make such behaviour a standard of the school. Respond to students, parents and staff with absolute honesty.

How to Promote Success

When principals, assistant principals or vice principals enter a school for the first time as administrators, they bring with them many things learned in their "past lives". They usually come with a few years of teaching experience, some theories about leadership and management learned in their courses in educational administration, and a lot of great hopes for the ways they can use their experience, talent, and knowledge. They believe they can make a difference.

On a different level, new principals also walk into their offices for the first time filled with anxiety and uncertainty. Will they be able to hand the responsibility of managing a school? Will they have positive relationships with the staff and students? How well will they deal with parents?

Individual administrators and the school systems that employ them share the responsibility of devising effective approaches to bringing new people on board smoothly; however, new principals must assume primary responsibility for their own learning. They must learn to help themselves.

Staying on Track: Legal Issues for School-Based Administrators

Introduction 240

Discipline 240

Copyright 243

Trespassing 244

Technology Related Issues 245

Liability and Negligence 246

Custody Orders and Access 247

Child Protection 249

Student Tracking 250

Privacy and Access to Information 251

Due Process and the Principles of Natural Justice 252

Occupational Health and Safety 252

Crisis Response 253

Relevant Federal and Provincial Legislation 254

Principals and the Law

There are many legal issues that may challenge you during the course of your career. You may find it useful to refer to the following general guidelines whenever you are faced with a situation that raises some legal questions or implications:

- Remember that you are a school principal, not a lawyer or a police officer.
- It is essential that you develop a good working knowledge about *The Education Act, 1995*, other relevant legislation and regulations, your school division's policies, as well as local school policies. You will also need to make sure that you keep up to date with any changes to the relevant legislation and policies.
- Ensure that you understand and can apply the current versions of your school division and local level regulations and protocols.
- Keep in mind that you do not have to face legal questions or issues alone. When in doubt, or if you feel that you need support, always ask a qualified person for guidance or advice.

The following are some important issues that are fairly typical, and which raise some interesting challenges.

1. Discipline

Student discipline issues, including individual cases where personal conduct has become a serious problem, can present many professional and personal challenges. You may find it useful to approach these issues with the following information and guidelines in mind.

Expectations of Student Conduct

Several sections of *The Education Act, 1995* speak to the kinds of behaviours that should be expected of students, as well as processes for dealing with specific cases.

- Section 150 notes that every student shall "submit to any discipline that would be exercised by a kind, firm, and judicious parent". This section also lists some other "general duties of students", including the requirement to "conform to the rules of the school" as approved by the school board or conseil scolaire.

- Section 151 indicates that students are accountable for their conduct to teachers, the principal, and the board's employees (e.g., to school bus drivers during the time that the student is in the personal charge of the driver). This section also notes that employees are, in turn, accountable to the principal in accordance with board procedures.

- Section 175(2) lists some specific duties of principals. Among these is the requirement to "administer or cause to be administered any disciplinary measures that are considered proper by him or her and that are consistent with this Act" (subsection "j").

- Sections 152 to 154 concern the processes for handling cases in which there is a signficant difficulty in the relationship between a student and the school. Several options are identified, including the procedures for suspensions and expulsions. There is also quite a lot of detailed information about the principal's role in these situations. As you familiarize yourself with these details, you will also need to pay close attention to the relevant policies and protocols of your board.

Searches of students or students' property

Section 175(2)(e) of *The Education Act, 1995* requires principals to "exercise general supervision over the well-being and good order of pupils while the pupils are at school or participating in school activities". You may face situations in which a student is suspected of carrying out an illegal act (e.g., selling drugs) or is in possession of prohibited materials (e.g., has weapons, illegal drugs, etc. on his or her person or in a locker). Although *The Act* does not give school officials or staff specific statutory power to search students or students' property, case law has established that principals and other teachers may in some instances conduct searches provided that:

- the search is reasonable at its inception. You must have very good reasons, supported by credible information, to carry out a search. The observed or suspected infraction of school regulations or discipline must be serious enough to justify this type of action. In addition, you must believe that a

search would reveal further evidence of the student's infraction. You may find it necessary, for example, to search a student and seize contraband or other possessions that in your judgement are detrimental to the learning environment or which threaten the safety of students and staff.
- the search is reasonable in scope and process. The extent of the search must fit the nature of the suspected infraction and must be based upon credible information. A search also has to be carried out in a sensitive manner. Factors such as the student's age and gender must be considered. You should also recognize that, from a legal perspective, random or wide scale searches are very problematic because of the likelihood that this type of action will lead to infringements of students' Charter rights.

Some general guidelines for handling these situations include:

- Always follow the policies and any protocols of the school board.
- Consult with your Director or designate before taking action. In situations where the safety of students, staff, and others involved appears to be in immediate jeopardy, you may find it necessary to take appropriate steps.

Using Reasonable Force: Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada

Sometimes principals and other teachers find that they have to restrain students physically. Examples of these situations include:

- removing a disruptive student who refuses a request to leave the classoom;
- restraining a student whose behaviour may result in self-injury or harm to others;
- escorting an uncooperative student from the school bus;
- intervening between fighting students.

There are many similar types of incidents in which a principal may have to exercise a reasonable amount of force. Sometimes students or parents will accuse the principal of assault. According to Canada's Criminal Code, a person commits assault when, without the consent of the individual in question, force is intentionally applied, either directly or indirectly. "Assault" also includes acts or gestures in which an individual has reasonable grounds to believe that someone has the ability to apply force. A threatening gesture or a simple tug at another person's coat may, in some circumstances, be viewed as an assault.

Section 43 of the Criminal Code is a defence that teachers and parents may invoke to an assault charge in certain cases. This section reads:

Every school teacher, parent or person standing in the place of a parent is justified in using force by way of correction toward a pupil or child, as the case may be, who is under his care, if the force does not exceed what is reasonable under the circumstances.

This section does not automatically protect an individual from criminal prosecution. A principal or other teacher, for example, may use force only when it is warranted (for example, to protect the safety of students or staff) and only to the extent that is reasonable within the specific circumstances of the situation. Evidence of unwarranted or excessive force may lead to a charge of assault and a criminal conviction.

Always follow your board's policies and protocols when applying restraint or other kinds of force. Call the police if there are explicit threats or if you feel that violence is imminent. Do not be a hero.

2. Copyright

The *Copyright Act* is designed to balance the interests of creators, publishers, and producers with the needs of users who want access to materials that are protected by copyright. Many copyright owners (e.g., writers, publishing companies, video producers, etc.) are members of organizations that administer their legal rights, as defined in the *Act*. These organizations are known as "collectives". An example is CANCOPY, a collective which licenses photocopying in Saskatchewan schools and in various other jurisdictions. Other collectives focus on the use of audiovisual materials.

The *Copyright Act* defines schools and some other educational institutions as "exceptions". This means that teachers, for example, may use works that are protected by copyright without having to ask permission or pay a royalty. The teacher must use the copyrighted material in the course of her or his professional role, and neither the individual teacher nor the educational institution may have a "motive of gain". (In other words, there cannot be a profit motive. Only the recovery of specific costs such as overhead is permitted.)

It is very important that all school staff understand what your school's CANCOPY agreements or other copyright licences allow. As noted in section 9 of *The Education Act, 1995*, educational institutions (and their staff members) must comply with the "terms, conditions, and restrictions" of copyright agreements. In addition to the kinds of photocopying that are specified in the CANCOPY agreement, there are a number of other permissable uses of copyrighted material in Saskatchewan schools. A few examples include the following:

- hand copying a work onto dry-erase surfaces and flip charts;
- copying a work for projection through an overhead projector;
- copying a work for use in an examination or test;
- performance by students of a copyrighted work;
- playing of a copyrighted sound recording;
- playing of radio and television programs;
- copying of news and news commentary programs;
- copying of other kinds of programs for educational purposes.

All of these examples have certain restrictions attached. For example, the teacher must use the materials for educational, non-profit purposes. There are additional restrictions on the playing or recording of radio and video programs. Copyright guidelines for web-based products also refer to some specific limitations. For current requirements regarding any of these uses of copyrighted materials, check with your board office or the Saskatchewan Learning (Department of Learning) website.

http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/curr_inst/iru/cmec.html (Copyright information for Saskatchewan schools)

http://www.ssta.sk.ca/communications/copyright.htm (Copyright guidelines for web-based products.)

3. Trespassing

To protect students, staff, and property, most school boards have policies that require visitors to check in with a receptionist or staff member as they enter the school. Individuals who have no purpose for being on school property (this includes students who have been suspended or expelled, or who are from another school) should be asked to leave immediately. If the individual refuses, contact the police.

A related problem involves dealing with someone who loiters on or near school premises or who creates a disturbance. Section 367 of *The Education Act, 1995* specifies the kinds of actions for which individuals may be held liable.

4. Technology Related Issues

Computers, software applications, Internet access, and e-mail accounts have quickly become commonplace in many Saskatchewan schools. When utilized appropriately, these technologies have some tremendous educational benefits. Unfortunately, sometimes individuals knowingly or unknowingly mis-use a school's computers and computer-related resources. The more serious kinds of problems can take various forms, including:

- criminal offences such as:
    - theft of hardware, software, or data;
    - mischief, as defined in section 430(1.1) of the Criminal Code. (A person commits mischief, for example, when he or she willfully destroys or alters data, renders data meaningless, useless, or ineffective, etc. In some cases, a person who engages in "spamming" may also be charged with mischief.)
    - unauthorized access and use of computers, as defined in section 342.1 of the Criminal Code. (This can include, for example, cases in which a person fraudulently "obtains, directly or indirectly, any computer service".)
    - uttering threats;
    - harrassment or stalking behaviours (e.g., via e-mail);
- copyright infringement (e.g., copying protected software or teaching and learning resources, "burning" music CDs, etc.)
- plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty (e.g., when a student claims credit for essays or other academic works that were downloaded);
- defamatory, offensive, as well as other forms of questionable or inappropriate comments and graphics (e.g., when students rate teachers or other students according to various criteria and post this information in chatrooms or on websites. Sometimes these cases can involve quite complex legal questions, including issues about the parameters of students' freedom of expression.)
- access by students to "adult" websites (e.g., pornography, gambling, violent games, etc.), as well as students' development of, or access to, inappropriate chatrooms.

School staff also need to take appropriate steps to protect the health and safety of students who use these technologies (e.g., ensuring the confidentiality of personal information about individual students).

Your board should have clear, well-known, and consistently implemented policies and guidelines for all users of computer related technologies. The policies and guidelines likely include some specific information about your responsibilities as a principal in this area.

5. Liability and Negligence

Most people realize that individuals can be held responsible for the intentional harm that they cause to others. But individuals can also be held responsible if they fail to act as a reasonable person would be expected to act in similar circumstances ("negligence"). If this negligence results in injury to another person, then legal action (e.g., a liability suit) may follow.

Section 232 of *The Education Act, 1995* refers to the immunity from liability of principals, other teachers, and other persons responsible for students. (Section 190 focuses in part on immunity from liability for those who are involved with school safety patrols.) Although this legal protection is fairly comprehensive, it is not total. Principals and teachers always need to act in ways that would be reasonably expected of a colleague in similar circumstances. They also need to follow carefully the policies and regulations of their school board, particularly when carrying out their duty of care for students.

The principal is required, for example, to "exercise general supervision over the well-being and good order of pupils while pupils are at school or participating in school activities" (section 175(2)(e) of *The Education Act, 1995*). This includes taking appropriate steps to protect students' safety while at school or on supervised trips. Some information that you will likely need includes:

- Find out what your responsibilities are, according to board policies, regulations, and procedures.
- Take steps to make staff aware of their responsibilities.
- Out-of-school events in which students are involved have additional duties and expectations for staff. Your board should have a list of what will be required on the part of students, parents, and staff to ensure that the event is safe for everyone involved.

- If in doubt about what you should do in a particular situation (e.g., what would be considered "reasonable" conduct), always ask your Director or designate before proceeding.

It is also a good idea to check with your board about the terms and conditions of its liability insurance coverage for staff. (Section 85(1)(cc) of *The Education Act, 1995* requires boards of education to carry certain insurance policies. The specific nature of the policies may vary from board to board.)

6. Custody Orders and Access

"Custody" refers to an individual's legal right and responsibility to care for a child. This includes the right to make decisions about the child's well-being and future. (The decisions typically involve the child's health care, religion, day care, education, extracurricular activities, and so on).

"Access" refers to the right of the child to have time with the non-custodial parent or, in some cases, grandparents or other close relatives. A person with access has the right to limited information about the child's health, education, and well-being.

Child custody and access arrangements may involve parents, grandparents, and other individuals. These arrangements usually take one of several different forms:

- From the perspective of the legal system, unless there is a custody order or agreement that says otherwise, the parents are regarded as the joint guardians of their minor children. Not all parents prepare a formal, written agreement about custody and access issues. Some prefer to have quite flexible understandings about who will care for the child at a given time and how significant decisions in the child's life will be made. Others specify who has "sole custody" (one parent or guardian has the right and responsibility to care for the child). There are also "joint custody" agreements.
- Parents or guardians who cannot decide between themselves or reach a settlement through the assistance of a lawyer or mediator, may proceed to court. Depending upon the circumstances of a specific case, a judge may:
    - assist the parties to reach an agreement;
    - make a decision about custody and access. (If this happens, a court order must be prepared.)

In special circumstances (e.g., if one parent fears that the other parent will abduct or harm the child), the court may be requested to issue a temporary (or "interim") custody order.

There are also cases in which the status of a student's custody and access arrangements may be unclear (e.g., if a court order concerning this child was made in a jurisdiction outside of Canada).

Given that at least some of the students in your school are likely involved in these kinds of custody and access arrangements, it is important to keep some basic guidelines in mind:

- The safety and well-being of the child is the first priority. The school should be regarded by everyone concerned as a safe, neutral space for the child. You and other members of the school staff do not have to accept abusive or other inappropriate behaviours from individuals who have custody or access.
- Remember that you are a principal, not a family counsellor.
- Try to obtain from parents or guardians as much of the relevant information as you (and your staff) will need about the status of a student's custody and access situation. You may need written confirmation of custody and access arrangements.
- Ask for copies of all relevant court orders, if any (e.g., Restraining Orders, Interim Orders, as well as any Amending Orders).
- Take steps to ensure that only the appropriate individuals have access to student records or other confidential information about the child. (Your board's policies and regulations in this area must be followed.)
- Assist staff to understand that educational decision making is the right and responsibility only of the custodial parent(s) or guardian(s).
- Have a procedure in place for dealing with parents who have access. Follow the policies and procedures, if any, of your board in this area. You will need to consider, for example, the handling of invitations to school events in which the child is a participant.

7. Child Protection

In Saskatchewan, an individual who has reason to believe that a child is being neglected or abused has a legal duty to report this information immediately to any of the following authorities:

- any Social Services office;
- a community crisis centre or unit, if available;
- a police office;
- an Indian Child and Family Service Agency.

Section 81 of the provincial *Child and Family Services Act* defines child abuse as any of the following:

- physical injury;
- substantial impairment of a child's mental or emotional functioning;
- exploiting a child or treating a child cruelly;
- contacting a child for a sexual purpose; and
- allowing or enouraging a child to engage in prostitution.

Section 11 of the *Act* notes that child neglect includes:

- not providing enough food, clothing, shelter or health care for the child;
- leaving a young child alone or without proper supervision or care.

The law also protects children who may suffer physical or emotional harm because of family violence.

A related piece of provincial legislation, *The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act*, came into effect in October, 2002. As the name implies, this *Act* focuses on the legal protection and support of children who are being exploited for sexual purposes. (Within the context of the legislation, a "child" is defined as a person who is actually or apparently under 18 years of age.) The *Act* specifies a number of immediate steps that authorities within the legal system may take to intervene in situations where there is suspected child sexual abuse. In addition, this *Act* requires every individual who has reasonable grounds to believe that a child is, or is likely to be, a victim of sexual abuse to report that information immediately to a peace officer or a child protection officer. (You should note that this requirement is consistent with the provisions of *The Child and Family Services Act*.)

All school staff should be made aware that suspected cases of child abuse or neglect **must** be reported. Failure to do so may result in a significant fine, a jail term, or both. Your board likely has specific procedures and guidelines, as well as local contact information, for your use in these kinds of situations. (The procedures and guidelines should be consistent with the Provincial Child Abuse Protocol.) As the school principal, you may also be required to carry out certain steps as follow-up to an initial report. Always consult with your Director or designate about the exact procedures to be followed.

Provincial Child Abuse Protocol:
http://www.saskjustice.gov.sk.ca/overview/publications/
Provincial_Child_Abuse_Protocol_1995.pdf

FAQ's about the protocol:

http://www.gov.sk.ca/socserv/services/famyouth/ChildProt/

8. Student Tracking

Sections 156 to 162 of *The Education Act, 1995* refer to school attendance matters, including some specific responsibilities of the principal. (Section 175 includes some related duties.) Your school board likely has some specific guidelines and requirements concerning student attendance records, progress reports, cumulative folders, and so on.

The Department of Learning has recently expanded the provincial Student Records System. One of the key purposes of this new Student Data System (SDS) is to determine which students are not in school, why this is the case, and how these individuals' educational needs may be met. Other purposes include:

- preparation of student transcripts;
- administration of Departmental exams;
- research and analysis;
- Statistics Canada requirements.

Principals are one group of officials who have access to this data system. You will need to complete a Security Access Authorization Form (available from your Director) in which you agree to the Student Tracking Protocol. The protocol is designed to ensure that student information remains confidential and that the data are used only for the intended purposes. Once the SDS is fully operational (likely in 2004-05), all schools should be able to use the Student

Tracking web application to submit withdrawal and enrollment changes throughout the school year. Please keep in mind, however, that you will also need to continue to meet any data requirements that your board may have.

Additional information is available from the Department's student records website at http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/student_records/tracking.html

National Missing Children's Registry

The SDS is not linked to the National Missing Children's Registry. (This registry is a service to assist police forces with their investigations of missing children.) Principals who have a suspicious out-of-province transfer into their school should notify their Director or the RCMP.

9. Privacy and Access to Information

Several pieces of federal and provincial legislation have implications for student privacy issues, and for your role as a principal:

- The federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act* has a number of provisions regarding the record keeping system for youths in conflict with the law. The *Act* also specifies some procedures that must be followed for the disclosure, storage, and deletion of this information. For details, see the federal Department of Justice's website at http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/dept/pub/ycja/ youth.html
- Provincial legislation includes *The Education Act, 1995* which requires that students' attendance and progress records be kept. A related piece of legislation is *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Privacy Act*. (Boards of Education are one of the "local authorities" covered by the *Act*.) This legislation allows individuals to apply for access to information or records that are in the possession or under the control of a board. The *Act* also includes some rules that the board must follow when collecting and using personal information. For more information about the *Act*, see the provincial Department of Justice's website at http://www.saskjustice.gov.sk.ca/legislation /summaries/l_a_f_o_i_pact.shtml
- As is the case with teachers, professionals from outside of the education sector (e.g., health care providers or social workers who work with students) must follow the

legislation, as well as any codes of ethics, that are related to their own areas of responsibility. The legislation and codes may affect whether and how these professionals disclose privileged information about individual children or youth to educators.

Within the limits set by this kind of relevant legislation, your board likely has some specific policies and guidelines regarding:

- the preparation, storage, and maintenance of student records,
- student privacy (e.g., whether and how students participate in research projects, the posting of students' personal information on school websites, etc.)
- communications with parents about students, including "access to student information" procedures to follow in cases where there is custody or access.

10. Due Process and the Principles of Natural Justice

All citizens have a common law right to "due process" and the principles of natural justice. In a school setting, this means that someone who is suspected of a serious violation of policies, rules or regulations will require, as a minimum:

- timely and appropriate notice of the accusations or charges;
- the right to be heard;
- an objective decision maker.

As a principal, you have a responsibility to apply these understandings of procedural fairness in your everyday work. (The principles of natural justice are reflected, for example, in Section 154 of *The Education Act, 1995* regarding the principal's role in handling student suspensions.)

11. Occupational Health and Safety

Various sections of *The Education Act, 1995* specify the responsibilities that boards of education have for the health and safety of staff and students. There are also many other relevant pieces of legislation (e.g, *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*) as well as various regulations (e.g., Fire Commissioner's Regulations, Health Regulations), and codes (at the federal, provincial, and local levels), all of which are intended to minimize risks to health and safety.

The Department of Learning has prepared a Health and Safety Guidelines resource for the use of education officials, school staff members, and others. Included in this resource is an "Occupational Health and Safety Checklist in Schools" as well as a summary of the health related roles and responsibilities for various school officials. The section on the principal's duties is as follows:

> Subject to the stated policies of the board of education, the principal is responsible for the general organization, administration and supervision of the school, the program and the staff. Specific duties are outlined in Section 175 of *The Education Act, 1995* and responsibilities related to school health and safety can be found in sections (b), (c), (d), (e), (m).
>
> The principal shall:
>
> a) understand and implement school board and school policies;
> b) practice and promote safe and healthy behaviours and attitudes;
> c) establish procedures for responding to and reporting health and safety incidents;
> d) conduct and facilitate regular health and safety inspections, identify potential risks to health and safety, and ensure that appropriate authorities are informed;
> e) ensure adequate supervision of students at all times;
> f) understand and consult with staff about effects of class size, composition, school specific needs and suitability of facilities and their effects on health and safety.

12. Crisis Response

Unfortunately, it is not always possible to prevent a crisis. Sometimes things happen that have serious consequences for a student, staff member, or the operation of the school. The following general guidelines may be helpful:

- Take steps to familiarize yourself and the school staff with your board's crisis response plan, if any. (For example, what procedures are outlined in the plan? What roles and responsibilities will be expected from individual staff in the event of a crisis? Is there a Crisis Response Team available? What is their role?)

- As a principal, you have a responsibility to use your professional judgement to assess the nature of the crisis. Take whatever appropriate, immediate steps you believe are needed to protect the safety of students, staff, and others who have a direct role in the school (e.g., on-site volunteers). In some cases, this may include notifying the police or other authorities.

- At the first opportunity, contact your Director or designate. The Director will likely be the person who initiates the next actions in the crisis response plan. Unless you have been given other direction, always assume that your Director will act as the spokesperson with the media or with others outside of the school.

- Remember that you are part of a team. Do not assume that you have to do everything on your own.

- When the crisis has subsided, assess with other staff members the effectiveness of the school's response.

Relevant Federal and Provincial Legislation

Various pieces of federal and provincial legislation may have implications for your role as a principal. The following is an annotated list of the main references. (Also note the summaries of the key legislation in the "Legal Issues" section of this *Principal's Handbook*.)

Keep in mind that legislation is always subject to change. New acts (statutes) may come into effect, and existing legislation may be revised. It is a good idea to revisit from time to time the legislation that is listed in this section.

Federal Legislation

The following website has links to the full text of Canada's *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. From this site you can also download some important federal acts (statutes), including the *Criminal Code*, the *Copyright Act*, and the *Divorce Act* (which includes sections on custody and access matters).

http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/

Charter of Rights

As one of Canada's constitutional texts, the *Charter* has enormous significance for everyday life in this country. Among other topics, the section on "legal rights" refers to the basic principles of fundamental (natural) justice as well as the "right to be secure against unreasonable search or seizure". (See the discussion of "student discipline" in this *Principal's Handbook*.)

http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/index.html

Criminal Code

Canada's *Criminal Code* is quite lengthy and detailed. Relevant pieces for educators include Part I (see section 43 regarding the use of reasonable force when correcting a pupil) and Part V concerning certain criminal actions against minors. For more information, see the discussion of "Discipline" in the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*.

http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-46/index.html

Youth Criminal Justice Act

This legislation received Royal Assent in February, 2002 and replaces the *Young Offenders Act*. As the new law is implemented (beginning in April, 2003), federal and provincial agencies expect to prepare various public legal education materials, including some resources that explain the implications of the new *Act* for educators. For example, the federal Department of Justice continues to update a number of resources that are linked at the following website:

http://canada.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/yj/legis/explan.html

You may wish to check this site from time to time as the *Act's* implementation proceeds. (There is also an interesting learning resource for students and teachers. See the link at http://www.epals.com/projects/justice/). Also note the discussion of "Privacy and Access to Information" in the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*.

Copyright Act

As noted in the discussion of "copyright" in the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*, the Department of Learning's website provides updated information about the appropriate uses of copyrighted materials in Saskatchewan schools.

http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/curr_inst/iru/cmec.html (Copyright information for Saskatchewan schools)

http://www.ssta.sk.ca/communications/copyright.html (Copyright guidelines for web-based products.)

The full text of the *Copyright Act* is available through the federal Justice Department's site:

http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/c-42/36324.html

Provincial (Saskatchewan) Legislation

Current versions of all acts (statutes) enacted by the Saskatchewan legislature are available through the following, fully searchable website:

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/publications/index.cfm?fuseaction=home&c=1577&id=2

Education Act

Obviously, it is essential to become thoroughly familiar with this one. Particularly relevant are Part IV (Pupils, Programs, and Services, including section 175 on the "duties of the principal") and Part V (especially section 231 on the "duties of teachers").

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/E0-2.pdf

Child and Family Services Act

This legislation addresses various aspects of the government's services for families and responsibilities for children in need of care. Part III ("Child Protection") as well as sections 74 ("Confidentiality") and 81 ("Child Abuse") are particularly relevant to educators. (Key aspects of this legislation are summarized in the "Child Protection" part of the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*.)

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/statutes/statutes/C7-2.PDF

Child and Family Services Act and the Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act

The Child and Family Services Act addresses various aspects of the government's services for families and responsibilities for children in need of care. Part III ("Child Protection") as well as sections 74 ("Confidentiality") and 81 ("Child Abuse") are particularly relevant to educators. (Key aspects of this legislation are summarized in the "Child Protection" part of the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*.)

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/statutes/statutes/C7-2.PDF

A related piece of legislation is *The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act*. Perhaps the most relevant information for principals and other school staff members includes sections 3 (definition of child sexual abuse), 4 (duty to report), and 24 (penalties for those who are convicted of failing to report child sexual abuse).

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/english/Statutes/Statutes/e8-2.pdf

Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

School boards are one of the "local authorities" covered by this legislation. (See the summary of "Privacy and Access to Information" in the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*.) Especially noteworthy is part IV of the legislation regarding "protection of privacy".

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/L27-1.pdf

Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993

As noted in the discussion of occupational health and safety in the legal issues section of this *Principal's Handbook*, the Department of Learning has prepared a *Health and Safety Guidelines* resource for the use of education officials, school staff members, and others. Your school board office should have a copy.

The full text of the legislation is available through the link below:

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/O1-1.pdf

Provincial Human Rights Legislation

You may also be interested in the *Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* (available at the link below.) Our provincial code specifies a number of rights, including the right to education, as well as the complaints process that is used in Saskatchewan.

http://www.qp.gov.sk.ca/documents/English/Statutes/Statutes/S24-1.pdf

A Significant Journey: A Saskatchewan Resource for the Principalship

Road Test Response Form

Our intent is to make this a "living" document in that we hope to regularly update both the information and activities for each section of this resource. We invite you to take the opportunity to let us know what you think of the resource.

What did you find in this resource that was particularly helpful to you in your role?

As you consider your leadership role, what other topics, areas of information would be helpful to you?

Thinking back on your experiences as an educational leader, are there resources or activities that you feel might work well in future editions of *A Significant Journey*?

Any other feedback regarding this resource?

Thank you for taking the time to respond! We hope you have found this to be a helpful and practical resource in your school-based leadership role.

Please e-mail your responses to spdu@stf.sk.ca. Or fax to SPDU 1-306-374-1122.